

The Creed of
IMAM BAYHAQĪ

ABŪ BAKR AḤMAD IBN ḤUSAYN AL-BAYHAQĪ

An Abridged Translation of
al-ʿItiqād waʾl-Hidāyah ilā Sabīl ar-Rashād

Together with
Saeed Fodeh's Synopsis of Bayhaqī's Text

Translated by
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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, alone without partners, and that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger. I invoke the blessings of Allah and His peace upon His final Messenger, Muḥammed, his family and Companions, along with all those who follow them in goodness until the Day of Rising.

Allah Most High made this temporary life a cultivating field for the Hereafter, and each soul shall reap in the next life the reward of what he or she had sown here. However, it is established that soundness of creed is pivotal for the acceptance of one's actions, and discrepancy in belief can jeopardise all of a person's righteous actions and struggle in this life. For this reason, scholars throughout the history of Islam wrote works which detailed what constitutes sound creed and also refuted the erroneous beliefs of groups who had strayed from the right path.

One prominent name from these scholars is that of the great Hadith master and jurist Imam Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, who wrote, amongst many beneficial works, *al-I'tiqād wa'l-Hidāyah ilā Sabīl al-Rashād*, the translation of which we are presenting herewith to readers. In this work, Bayhaqī has merged his command over creedal issues with his acclaimed mastery of Hadith, relating each hadith back through his own chain of transmission. Thus, it would not be incorrect to say that the *I'tiqād* is a creedal and Hadith work at the same time.

I am indebted to Shaykh Nasir Abdussalam for the dedication he has shown in translating this work and honouring Turath to publish yet another wonderful scholarly treatise. I would like to thank Shaykh Bilal Patel for his technical editing of the text; and Shaykh Andrew Booso for his meticulous editing and proofreading of the text, with a very informative introduction that will leave the reader's heart content and place his mind at rest.

I pray that Allah accepts this work from us and the original author who was a means of goodness for the ummah. May Allah unite us all, including the author, in Jannah with the Chosen One ﷺ.

YAHYA BATHA

London 2016

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The name of the author of this translated theological text is given by Dhahabī as Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Mūsā, imam Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī al-Khusrawjirdi (384–458 AH).¹ Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī replaces 'al-imām' (literally 'leader' or 'master') with 'al-ḥāfiẓ' (a title given to major Hadith scholars),² and adds 'an-Naysābūrī' after 'al-Bayhaqī'.³ Dhahabī praised him as being 'unequalled in his age' (*wāḥid zamānih*),⁴ 'unrivalled amongst his peers' (*fard aqrānih*) and the 'ḥāfiẓ of his time' (*ḥāfiẓ awānih*); and that, furthermore, 'his renown reached a great distance' (*ba'uda šituh*).⁵ Dhahabī's opening description of Bayhaqī in his *Siyar a'lām an-nubalā'* states: 'He is the ḥāfiẓ and most-erudite scholar (*'allāmah*), firmly established (*thabt*), a jurist and Shaykh of Islam.'⁶ Subkī's introductory comments on Bayhaqī include the following:

He was Imam Bayhaqī: one of the imams of the Muslims, guides of the believers, and callers to the firm rope of Allah. He was a sublime jurist (*faqīh jalīl*); an eminent (*kabīr*) ḥāfiẓ; an adept jurisprudent (*uṣūlī niḥrīr*); abstinent; godly; obedient to Allah (*qānit li'llāh*); firm in supporting the [Shāfi'ī legal] school, in terms of legal methodology (*aṣlan*) and derivation of law (*furū'an*); and a mountain from the mountains of knowledge. . . He was the *muḥaddith*⁷ of his time (*zaman*) and the Shaykh of the Sunnah in his era (*waqt*).⁸

Whilst his academic speciality was Hadith and Islamic law, he dedicated a reasonable amount of his time to producing theological treatises, which exemplify the nature of the emerging attempt at a traditionalist-rationalist synthesis that Bayhaqī was part of, and which would be further developed in slightly altered forms in later Islamic history. In fact, Jonathan A. C. Brown notes that Bayhaqī 'was representative of the new Shāfi'ī/Ash'arī orthodoxy',⁹ and 'Both later Shāfi'ī/Ash'arīs and Ḥanbalī/über-Sunnīs respected and relied on his work.'¹⁰ In support of Brown's assertion, one only has to see the praise of a traditionalist like Dhahabī and an Ash'arī like Subkī for Bayhaqī, even if they are not in complete agreement with him on everything.

THE LIFE OF IMAM BAYHAQĪ (384–458 AH)

Dhahabī mentions that Bayhaqī learnt a great deal from his most senior shaykh Abū 'l-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-'Alawī. He also studied with numerous other scholars, including Abū 'Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī and Abū Bakr ibn Fūrak; and

Dhahabī adds that his teachers (*shuyūkh*) number more than 100. Furthermore, his literary works numbered ‘1,000 portions’ (*alf juzʿ*).¹¹

Bayhaqī was described by Dhahabī as one of the ‘major associates’ (*kibār aṣḥāb*) of the great Hadith master Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥākim, the compiler of the *Mustadrak*. Nevertheless, Dhahabī notes that a number of major Hadith collections were not attained by Bayhaqī: *Jāmiʿ at-Tirmidhī*, *Sunan an-Nasāʾī* and *Sunan Ibn Mājah*.¹² Dhahabī states: ‘His sphere in hadith is not large, but Allah blessed him in his narrations for the excellence of his method in them and his sagacity and expertise in the subject-matters and narrators.’¹³ In addition, Dhahabī writes that an ‘abundant group’ (*jamāʿah kathīrah*) narrated from him.

Dhahabī states that Bayhaqī learnt the Shāfiʿī legal school (*madhhab*) from Abū ‘l-Faṭḥ Nāṣir ibn Muḥammad al-ʿUmarī al-Marwazī and others, to the point that he reached mastery of the school. Dhahabī adds that after Bayhaqī lived a period of time in Bayhaq and authored whilst there, he was beseeched to go to Nishapur and spread religious knowledge; and so he acceded the request in 441 AH. In Nishapur the scholars of the city convened and attended the reading of his work. For Dhahabī, Bayhaqī was ‘the principal scholar to gather the texts of Shāfiʿī and to vindicate them by the Book and the Sunnah’. Moreover, Imam of the Two Sanctuaries Juwayni said: ‘Every Shāfiʿī scholar is indebted to Shāfiʿī except Bayhaqī, to whom Shāfiʿī is indebted for him writing so many works strengthening the school.’¹⁴ In this regard, Brown writes:

Al-Bayhaqī organized al-Shāfiʿī’s statements and proof texts in the massive *Maʿrifat al-sunan wa al-āthār* and then compiled his *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, a huge ḥadīth collection backing up every detail of Shāfiʿī substantive law with Prophetic traditions as well as opinions from the Companions. Al-Bayhaqī was sought out as an expert on Shāfiʿī *fiqh* and al-Muzanī’s *al-Mukhtaṣar*. . . Works such as his *al-Madkhal ilā al-Sunan al-kubrā* (Introduction to the Great Sunan) and the *Sunan* itself champion the Shāfiʿī transmission-based legal methodology and the school’s body of substantive law. In works like his *Khilāfiyyāt* (The Disagreements), al-Bayhaqī defends the school’s positions against its Ḥanafī opponents.¹⁵

In terms of theology, Subki writes about Bayhaqī: ‘He studied systematic theology (*ʿilm al-kalām*) according to the school (*madhhab*) of Ashʿarī.’ Bayhaqī’s teacher Ibn Fūrak had studied with Abū ‘l-Ḥasan al-Bāhili, who had studied with Ashʿarī. And Ibn Fūrak authored *Mujarrad maqālāt al-Ashʿarī*. Yasir Kazi writes that

certain pro-Ashʿarī Shāfiʿī elements of Nishapur (most likely the chief judge, al-Qāḍī al-Ḥirī) convinced the Simjūrid governor Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (*rul.* 345–71/956–82) to invite him [Ibn Fūrak] from Rayy to Nishapur.

The Simjūrid built a *madrasa* for Ibn Fūrak and gifted it to him. This *madrasa* was one of the earliest ever built in that region. It also appears to be the first *madrasa* established upon Ash‘arī thought, and helped secure, for the first time, an Ash‘arī foothold in Khurasān [sic].¹⁶ This must have occurred before the end of his governorship in 371/982.¹⁷

As will be clear from the later discussion on the Ash‘arī school, Bayhaqī is situated within the early school, which is less philosophical than its later manifestation.¹⁸ Brown writes of Bayhaqī: ‘He affirms the transmission-based trust in the revealed text of the sunna for understanding dogma, while simultaneously validating Ash‘arī efforts to interpret God and His attributes rationally.’¹⁹

Although Bayhaqī found Ash‘arī comrades in Nishapur, he and his fellow Ash‘aris still encountered opposition from the popular anti-*kalām* scholars (presumably with the tacit or explicit approval of the rulers²⁰). Subkī highlights how Bayhaqī was involved in defending Abū ‘l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī and the Ash‘aris against what they deemed to be false accusations. For instance, Subkī notes Bayhaqī writing a treatise entitled *Ḥayāt al-anbiyā’ ‘alayhim as-salām fī qubūrihim* [The life of the Prophets (upon them be peace) in their graves], which is in response to a ‘lie’ (*kidhb*) that claimed Ash‘arī denied the prophethood of Prophets after their deaths.²¹ Furthermore, Subkī elaborates on the ‘trial’ (*fitnah*) that befell a number of Ash‘aris in Nishapur, including Bayhaqī (and Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī and Imam of the Two Sanctuaries Juwaynī), whereby they had to leave the city during early Seljuk rule.²²

Subkī relates from Ibn ‘Asākir and others that Bayhaqī wrote a ‘treatise’ (*kitāb*) after receiving troubling news whilst in Bayhaq about the ‘inquisition’ (*miḥnah*) of the Ash‘aris by the vizier Abū Naṣr Maṣṣūr ibn Muḥammad al-Kundurī, whereby Shia and Ash‘aris in the main were sacked from their official posts if suspected of being ‘heretics’, imprisoned, banished and cursed from the pulpits. Bayhaqī’s treatise was addressed to the Sultan and pleaded that the Ash‘aris were being unjustly persecuted, for ‘. . .they are from *Ahl al-Sunna*; they do not go to the extremes of the Mu‘tazilis in denying the attributes, nor the extremes of the anthropomorphists in assuming them to be human-like’ (Kazi translation). In the letter, Bayhaqī praised the knowledge and virtue of the eponymous founder of the Ash‘arī school and how he had many knowledgeable followers amongst the Ḥanafīs, Mālikīs and Shāfi‘īs; and that Ash‘arī was ‘sound in creed’ (*ḥusn i’tiqādiḥ*), and possessed more virtues than could be enumerated in the treatise. Bayhaqī added that Ash‘arī did not commit any blameworthy innovation in the religion (*bid‘ah*); ‘however, he took the statements of the Companions and the Successors, and those after them from the imams of the foundations of the religion (*uṣūl ad-dīn*), and he rendered them victorious [against the blameworthy innovators] by

elucidating augmentation (*ziyādah sharḥ*) and demonstration (*tabyīn*). Bayhaqī further states that Ash‘arī was a champion of the Sunnis (*ahl as-sunnah wa’l-jamā‘ah*), and supported the statements of the great past scholars, such as Abū Ḥanīfah, Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Awzā‘ī and other Syrians, Mālik, Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and others from ‘the People (*ahl*) of Hadith’, Layth, Bukhārī and Muslim (‘the two imams of the People of Narrations (*ahl al-āthār*)’), and ‘the Memorisers of the Sunnah’. Subkī then relates how Bayhaqī referred to the hadith, ‘At the head of every 100 years, Allah will bring for this community a person who will revive its religion for it’, and those hadiths that praise the people of the Companion Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī,²³ and argued that these allude to the latter’s descendants, in our case the maligned theologian Abū ‘l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī. For Bayhaqī, Ash‘arī was raised by Allah as an ‘imam’ and ‘and undertook to give victory to Allah’s religion’ when the ‘blameworthy religious innovators (*mubtadi‘ah*) had become numerous’ and misrepresented God’s attributes, ‘left the ostensive meaning (*ẓāhir*) of the Book and the Sunnah’, and disclaimed other matters of belief (such as the Night Ascension, that Paradise and the Fire are created now, the seeing of Allah in Paradise for its people, the punishment in the grave, etc.); and then Bayhaqī proceeded to laud Ash‘arī for his success in combating these religious deviations. Subkī’s summary of the treatise has Bayhaqī say that ‘the Companions and whoever follows them in excellence from the scholars of this community—its jurists and *muḥaddiths*—are upon the creed (‘*aqidah*) of Ash‘arī; nay, Ash‘arī is upon their creed!’²⁴

From a broader historical and group perspective, it is of note that an arch-traditionalist like Ibn Taymiyya considered Ash‘arīs like Bayhaqī (and Bāqillānī) to be ‘nearest’ (*aqrab*) to the position of ‘affirmation’ (*ithbāt*) of God’s attributes, and were the ‘distinguished Ash‘arīs’ (*fuḍalā’ al-Ash‘ariyyah*). Ibn Taymiyya further stated that ‘The creed of Aḥmad which Abū ‘l-Faḍl²⁵ wrote down was utilised by Bayhaqī.’ Abū ‘Abdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī ‘l-‘Aynayn specifies that the *ithbāt* that traditionalists approve from Bayhaqī are his affirmation of God’s Face, two hands and eye²⁶ (as seen in this publication).

Regarding Bayhaqī’s piety, Dhahabī and Subkī do not mention much about his spiritual life. Although Dhahabī quotes ‘Abd al-Ghāfir on his general piety and reputation for being inclined towards the Hereafter over the present world: ‘He was upon the conduct of the scholars (*sīrat al-‘ulamā’*): content with little (*yasīr*) from the world and resplendent (*mutajammilan*) in his abstinence (*zuhd*) and godliness (*war‘*). He was like that until the end of his life, and his death was in that way.’²⁷ In addition, Subkī mentions that for 30 years prior to his death he constantly fasted.²⁸ Furthermore, he also compiled, in the words of Gibril Haddad, ‘the foremost large book exclusively devoted to the person of the Prophet ﷺ’, namely *Dalā’il an-nubuwwah* [The proofs of

prophethood], which is referred to quite frequently in this work, *The Creed of Imam al-Bayhaqī*, that has been translated here.²⁹

He died in Nishapur in 458 AH and was carried to and buried in Khasrajand.³⁰

ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

I do not intend to present here an expansive discussion on theology, but to simply give an introductory context to Bayhaqī as a theologian. Nonetheless I will try to provide some essential points, with numerous indicators to more expansive discussions that a student can explore.³¹

God says: ‘So believe in Allah and His Messenger and the light which We have revealed’ (Qur’ān 64:8); and He expressly commands that ‘Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it’ (Qur’ān 59:7). Belief (*īmān*) in the revelation is foundational to truly submitting to God; so much so that one can pick Ibn ‘Ashir, amongst many, who stipulated that the ‘first obligation’ (*awwal wājib*) of a legally responsible adult (*mukallaf*) is to know the attributes of Allah and His Messengers.³² Farfūr, like other later theologians, states that the ruling (*ḥukm*) of *‘ilm at-tawḥīd*, or the ‘science of Divine Oneness’, is that it is ‘personally obligatory’ (*farḍ ‘ayn*).³³ Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī writes in this regard, ‘In Islam, *‘aqīda* [‘belief’] comes before *‘amal* [action], as belief is the foundation and action is the building. No building can stand without a foundation. After belief comes actions, which are quite diverse.’³⁴

As knowledge became specialised, the study of correct belief in light of the revelation came to be understood by a variety of names. From a pro-*kalām* perspective, Aḥmad ibn ‘Īsā al-Anṣārī said, ‘You should know that this science [of belief] is called the science of doctrine [*‘aqā’id*], the science of fundamentals [*uṣūl al-dīn*], the science of Divine oneness [*tawḥīd*], and the science of speculative theology [*kalām*].’³⁵ However, such elaborations of beliefs contain tenets of varying levels of importance, including those that are foundational (and distinguish believer from non-believer); and those that are disputed (even amongst the Companions) and do not lead to a person being identified as a non-believer).³⁶ Ghazzālī states in this regard in *Fayṣal at-Tafriqah*:

As for the Maxim, it is that you know that speculative matters (*al-naẓariyyāt*) are of two types. One is connected with the fundamental principles of creed, the other with secondary issues. The fundamental principles are acknowledging the existence of God, the prophethood of His Prophet, and the reality of the Last Day. Everything else is secondary.

Know that there should be no branding any person an Unbeliever over any secondary issue whatsoever, as a matter of principle, with one exception: that such a

person reject a religious tenet that was learned from the Prophet and passed down via diffusely congruent channels (*tawātur*).³⁷

One can see the impetus behind the community's drive to ascertain and preserve the correct tenets of faith in light of Prophetic prophesy forewarning the splitting of the community. Maydānī writes in his commentary on Ṭaḥāwī's *ʿAqīdah*, on the issue of it being an 'explanation of the creed (*bayān al-i'tiqād*) of the People of the Sunnah and the Group (*ahl as-sunnah wa'l-jamā'ah*):

'The People of the Sunnah', namely the Muhammadan way of life and path. 'And' the People of 'the Group' from the Companions and Successors, and those after them who adhere to the Prophet ﷺ. Najm al-Ghazzī said in *Ḥusn at-tanabbuh fī at-tashabbuh*, "The way of the path of the Ahl al-Sunna wa 'l-Jamā'a is what the Prophet ﷺ and his noble Companions followed. And it is that which is followed by the Vast Majority [*as-sawād al-a'zam*] of the Muslims throughout the ages. They are "the Group" [*jamā'ah*], which is victorious in [upholding] the truth; [in effect,] they [represent] the Saved Sect [*al-firqah an-nājiyah*] from among the seventy-three groups. It is reported by the authors of the *Sunans* (and Tirmidhī declares it authentic [*ṣaḥīḥ*]) from Abū Hurayra ؓ that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "The Jews dispersed into seventy-one groups, and the Christians into seventy-two groups, and my umma will divide into seventy-three groups." This ḥadīth has been transmitted through numerous other chains, among which is the report narrated by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr in which he ؓ said, "All of them will be in the Fire except for one group." They asked, "Who are they, O Messenger of Allāh?" He replied, "That which I and my Companions follow" (Tirmidhī judges this acceptable [*ḥasan*]). Among them is also the report of Mu'āwiya ؓ in which the Messenger ﷺ said, "Seventy-two will be in the Fire and one will be in Paradise and that is 'the Group'" (*Abū Dāwūd* and others). A similar tradition is the report of Ibn 'Abbās ؓ in which he ؓ said, "All of them will be in the Fire except for one." So it was asked, "What is the one?" He ؓ held his hand and said, "The Group. So hold fast to the rope of Allāh all together and do not become disunited."³⁸

One notes that many pro-*kalām* scholars have taken an optimistic-majoritarian view of the Muslim community's adherence to correct belief. After quoting the ḥadīth of the 73 sects, 'Alī Qārī writes, after quoting 'and one [of the sects] is in Paradise, and it is "the Group"', that this has the

meaning of most of the people of the religion (*ya'nī akthar ahl al-millah*). His community (upon him be prayers and peace) will not concur upon error (*ḍalālah*), as what has come from him (upon him be prayers and peace); and in a narration, 'You must adhere to the vast majority (*as-sawād al-a'zam*).'³⁹

In addition, from a traditionalist perspective, one sees mainstream Ḥanbalī/salafī/Wahhābī⁴⁰ anti-*kalām* scholars also taking recourse to these types of narrations and adopting such an optimistic-majoritarian view. For instance, Ibn Taymiyyah is quoted from his *Majmūʿ al-fatāwā* as saying that

the Saved Sect (*al-firqah an-nājiyah*) is the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah; and they are the greatest multitude (*al-jumhūr al-akbar*) and the vast majority (*as-sawād al-a'zam*). As for the remaining sects, they are the people of irregularity (*shudhūd*), division (*tafarruq*), blameworthy innovation (*bid'ah*) and heresy (*ahwā'*); and none of them attained the size (*mablagh*) of the Saved Sect, to say nothing of being commensurate with it! Nay, the disunion of some of them is of the utmost paltriness (*ghāyat al-qillah*). The distinguishing feature of these sects is their departure [from] the Book, the Sunnah and Consensus (*ijmā'*).⁴¹


Yet the former Grand Muftī of Saudi Arabia, and leading salafī, 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Bāz, writes that the Group will become 'very sparse' in 'the end of time'.⁴²

Of course, one's understanding of the 'Vast Majority' will depend on how one defines who qualifies for being part of this group. Certainly with regards to the mass of people, untrained in any form of theology beyond the basics, it is difficult to define them as being Ash'arī, Māturīdī or Traditionalist (as the point is made later by both El Shamsy and Halverson). Nonetheless some scholars have warned against complacently adhering to a 'majority'. In commenting on Muḥāsibī's definition of 'the basis of steadfastness (*aṣl al-istiqāmah*)' as consisting of 'adhering to the Book and the Sunnah, and the necessity (*luzūm*) of [following] the Group', 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah writes: 'The meaning of "the necessity of [following] the Group" is "the necessity of [following] the truth and its people, even if they are few in number". There is no necessity of [following] the majority of people (*lā luzūm akthar an-nās*).' Abū Ghuddah then proceeds to buttress his argument with statements from numerous illustrious figures, most notably 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, who is quoted by Ibn al-Qayyim as saying: 'The Group is what conforms to the truth even if you are all alone.' Ibn al-Qayyim is then quoted by Abū Ghuddah as pointing to how small the Group was in the time of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and 'the judges, the muftis, the caliph and their followers were the ones who remained isolated [from the Group]'.⁴³

Although such general characterisations of the Group are quite common, one sees Luwaihiq give a comprehensive view of the various opinions of what 'the Group' means according to the scholars: 1) 'the vast majority of the people of Islam' (Shāṭibī stated that it 'includes all the *mujtahideen* and scholars of the nation and the people of the Shareeah who act upon it. The masses are included in that group because they are the followers of the scholars.');

2) 'the leading *mujtahideen* scholars' (attributed to Ibn al-

Mubārak ‘and a number of early scholars’, including Tirmidhī who saw it referring to ‘the people of fiqh, knowledge and hadith’; and Shāṭibī relates that the scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* hold this position; Ibn Baṭṭāl contended that it referred to ‘the people “who tie and untie” [*ahl al-ḥall wa’l-‘aqd*⁴⁴] [that is, the leaders of society] in every era’); 3) ‘the Companions in particular’; 4) ‘the Muslim community when they gather under one ruler’ (attributed to Ṭabarī)—the four opinions are said to have been related to have been put forward by Ṭabarī and quoted by Ibn Ḥajar in *Fath al-Bārī*—5) ‘the community of the people of Islam when they come together on an issue’.

Luwaihiq then concludes that *jamā‘ah* has been used in two ways: 1) ‘in reference to a structure, form and make-up’; 2) ‘a methodology and way’. The ‘first usage’ refers to when ‘the Muslims agree upon a legally sanctioned leader, they become a congregation or *jamaah* that one is obliged to adhere to and not separate from’.⁴⁵ The ‘second usage’ indicates that ‘The statements of the early scholars show that the *jamaah* refers to a set of characteristics and not simply a form or structure. A person by himself can be the *jamaah* if he were the only one abiding by those characteristics’ (and Luwaihiq quotes the aforementioned statement of Ibn Mas‘ūd  on this point).⁴⁶

In relation to how the later community attempted to arrive at any sort of orthodoxy, Tim Winter writes:

In place of ecclesial authority, medieval Islam came to recognise the infinitely more ponderous and difficult principle of *ijmā‘*: the consensus of believers. True belief, it was thought, would always be the belief of the majority (*jumhūr*); sects (*firāq*) were necessarily minorities. The large and detailed heresiographical literature which supplies so much of our information about this history everywhere assumes that God is ‘with the congregation’. His mercy and love for the Muslim community ensure that ‘it will never agree on an error’, and that ‘the individual who departs from the community departs to Hellfire’. Although Sunnī Muslims never agreed on whether the community (*jamā‘a*) in question denoted the mass of believers, or only their scholarly representatives, this attitude clearly calmed the psychological fear that heresy might one day prevail.

An interesting insight into the psychology of theological interpretation in Islam, and a possible explanation for the later developments that contrast with an earlier simple theological method, is provided by Sherman A. Jackson in his contrasting ‘Arabians’ (those ‘original’ Arabs⁴⁷ to whom the revelation first came) and ‘Arabs’ (the Arabicized people in the outer regions of the converted Muslim world⁴⁸):

The rise and development of systematic theology in Islam is inextricably linked to the spread of the religion itself. While Muhammad’s original followers undoubtedly

contemplated theological suggestions of the Qur'ān alongside his supplemental addenda, the absence of any preexisting *systematic* thought in Arabia spared them having to reconcile this with any overarching, formal criterion. Arabian interpretative proclivities tended, rather, to be far more axiomatic than analytical. The meaning and utility of revelation was both accessed and measured by the criterion of Arabian 'common sense,' a far more relaxed and porous prism than the rigid philosophical schemas that later dominated. . . This depiction of the Arabians is confirmed by the seeming paucity of theologically relevant exchanges among the Prophet's contemporaries and their immediate heirs. . .

By the middle of the second/eighth century, however, the Muslim conquests had engendered a process of ethnic and civilizational heterodyning that generated a fundamental shift in the interpretative orientation of critical masses of Arab (to be distinguished from Arabian) Muslims. In relying on peripheral vision, the original Arabians had simply been doing what comes naturally. So, too, however, would growing numbers of newly converted Arabicized peoples who were heirs of far more systematic and analytical regimes of sense. The resulting dissonance in their respective reconciliation strategies divided Muslim theologians into two main camps: Traditionalism and Rationalism. Ultimately, this division would determine the course and substance of Muslim theological history and remain operative right down to the present day.

Contrary to common depictions, the fault line separating these two theological approaches did not lie in each giving a different priority to reason (*al-'aql*) versus revelation. Rationalists were no less committed to revelation, or even tradition, than were the Traditionalists; and the Traditionalists were no more averse to using reason than were Rationalists. It is more accurate to say that these two approaches represented not two different *attitudes toward* reason but two different *traditions of* reason.⁴⁹

Ahmed El Shamsy adds for our purposes:

By the end of the tenth century, the broad outlines of the developed Sunnī orthodoxy had taken shape. This orthodoxy was structured around several established schools of law, which defined right action, and the three main 'schools' of theology (Ash'arīs, Māturīdīs and traditionists⁵⁰)⁵¹ that defined right belief.⁵²

Halverson refines the view of this agreed Mamluk orthodoxy:

It was in this atmosphere that the Ash'arite scholar Taj al-Din al-Subki (d. 1370 CE) wrote his famous poem *al-Nuniyyah*, investigating the points of difference between the two major Sunni schools of *kalam*, the Ash'arites and the Maturidites, in which he concluded that their differences were only minor and, in some instances, merely

semantic in nature. Al-Subki's contention was then adopted by the Sunni community, overlooking centuries of bitter antagonism between Ash'arite Shafi'ites and Malikites with Maturidite Hanafites.⁵³

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi writes: 'The differences between the Ash'arites and the Maturidies [sic] were simply marginal and limited to 30 to 40 issues of comparatively lesser importance'.⁵⁴ Indeed, Berger writes:

Ottoman Ash'arite and Māturīdī theologians not only agreed to respectfully disagree. Although Ottoman theologians (and their Turkish successors to the present day) would define themselves as followers of al-Māturīdī, their theological thought was heavily influenced by Ash'arite authors whose writings became one of the bases of theological education within the Ottoman Empire since the ninth/fifteenth century. . . This does not mean that Mamluk and Ottoman theologians did not have conflicts over minor differences that are typical of learned communities. . . Thus, the differences between Ash'arites and Māturīdīs in Mamluk and Ottoman times were of interest only to small circles of the intellectual elite who, as we have seen, furthermore had no interest any more in making them matters of principle.⁵⁵

Although theological controversies are generally given great prominence by religious scholars, El Shamsy helps us put such discourses into perspective for the general Muslim populace:

There are few direct sources which shed light on the reception of theology by ordinary believers in the pre-modern period. Most of what can be discovered on this subject must be gleaned from the writings of scholars; these, however, had little interest in popular religion and generally mention the beliefs of the common people only in the context of bemoaning ignorance and superstition among the masses. Consequently, not much is known about how ordinary Muslims received, understood and contributed to theological orthodoxy. . .

What we do know is that the discourse of the hadith folk enjoyed immense legitimacy and popularity among ordinary people from its very beginning. The traditionists⁵⁶ were perceived as safeguards of the information through which the model embodied by the life of the Prophet (*sunna*) could be accessed. Recitations of prophetic traditions, covering a wide variety of subjects including theological issues, were often attended by thousands if not tens of thousands of listeners. In contrast, the public generally shunned the debates of the early *mutakallimūn*. The latter's elitist discourse and their acerbic public exchanges which easily turned to polemics and sophistry alienated ordinary believers, who, it seems, often considered such bold

speculation regarding the nature of God to border on the impious and thus viewed the theories of the theologians with suspicion.⁵⁷

This analysis serves as a kindly reminder for how non-specialists should view scholarly disagreements on abstract theological arguments; and, in fact, one still witnesses the general disregard, or even contempt, for such theological debates in preference for more practical and essential religious considerations. Halverson adds:

Hence, while the majority of Shafi'ite, Malikite, and Hanafite scholars (*ulama*), administrators, and other social elites may well have been devout adherents of Ash'arism or Maturidism, and perhaps a good segment of the general populace as well, it is unlikely that the majority of everyday people living in medieval Muslim societies had any substantive familiarity with the often abstract, intellectual religiosity of the theologians.⁵⁸

Indeed, non-scholars have been warned against delving into abstract theology. The great Ghazzālī—arguably the greatest theologian of late Islam; and if not that, then perhaps the most famous and lauded of the late scholars—wrote a treatise entitled *Iljām al-‘awāmm min ‘ilm al-kalam* [Restraining the general public from systematic theology]. He wrote about the ‘fourth protocol’ that a non-specialist should have with regards to reports that imply anthropomorphism:

That (silence) is compulsory for laypersons, because such an individual is exposing himself, by asking about something which he cannot bear, and he is indulging in something for which he is unqualified. So if he asks an ignorant person, his response will increase him in ignorance, and it may perhaps cause him to fall into unbelief without perceiving it. If he asks one with knowledge, the one who knows would be incapable of helping him comprehend due to the limits of his ability to understand, just as a mature person is incapable of helping a child to understand. . . Rather, their [the lecturers'] duty is to restrict themselves to what we have mentioned and what the *Salaf* have mentioned. This is to go out of one's way in exonerating, absolving, negating similarities [from Him], and [clarifying] that He ﷻ is free from having the characteristics of a body or accidental qualities of one. . . It is not appropriate to take the layperson beyond the proofs of the Qur'ān and what is of similar meaning from the convincing vivid proofs that tranquilize hearts and bring them to calmness and conviction. Anything beyond it is not within the scope of his capacity. . .

Then if it is said, 'Let us presume that there is an adamantly disputatious layperson who does not blindly follow, and the proofs of the Qur'ān and the vivid and convincing declarations that race to [peoples'] understandings do not convince him. What are we to do with him?' We would say [that] this one is sick. . . The license we

have in that degree of medicating does not indicate the opening of the door to polemical theology with all people. For surely, medications are [only] used with respect to the sick—and they are the few. What the sick are treated with by reason of necessity, the healthy may be protected from. The original healthy primordial nature is [always] prepared to accept faith without any argument or exposition of the realities of proofs, and the harm in using the medicine with healthy folk is no less harmful than in neglecting to medicate the sick.⁵⁹

In a similar manner, Ghazzālī, in the *Fayṣal*, sets out the rationale behind his being a theologian whilst deterring people from it:

In fact, were we ourselves to put aside all pretensions of deference and decorum, we would declare outright that delving into speculative theology [*kalām*], due to its many liabilities, is religiously forbidden (*ḥarām*), except for two persons: 1) A man whose heart develops doubts which neither simple religious homilies nor prophetic reports will remove. An argument based on speculative theology may serve to remove these doubts and provide a cure for his sickness. . . But care must be taken to ensure that he is only exposed to those arguments that are sound and do not carry the germ of the disease from which he suffers. . . 2) A person of superior intelligence who is firmly grounded in religion and whose faith is reinforced by the light of certainty who wants to acquire this discipline in order to be able to treat those who fall sick with doubts, and in order to silence those who are given to unsanctioned innovation when they come upon the scene, and to guard his belief against the attempts by those who are steeped in unsanctioned innovation to seduce him. Learning this (discipline) with this aim in mind is a communal religious obligation (*farḍ kifāya*). And learning enough of it to be able to dispose of doubt and overcome specious arguments on dubious issues is a religious obligation upon each individual (*farḍ ‘ayn*), assuming there is no other way to restore one’s deeply-held beliefs.⁶⁰

In summation, Nawawī not only warns the ‘common people’ (*‘awāmm*) from ‘discussing the subtleties of scholastic theology [*daqā’iq al-kalām*], lest corruption difficult to eliminate find its way into their basic religious convictions’, but he also applied such a warning to the ‘vast majority of those learning or possessing Sacred Knowledge [*jamāhīr al-mutafaqqihīn wa’l-fuqahā’*].⁶¹ As such, one sees that not only are most people not interested in such developed theological considerations, but most do not have the aptitude for such studies.

THE ASH‘ARĪ SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Ash‘arī theological school is, in the words of Majid Fakhry, one of ‘systematic theology (*kalam*)’.⁶² Yasir Kazi notes that ‘During the first two centuries of Islam, *kalām* remained primarily a non-Sunnī phenomenon. However, early in the third Islamic century, *kalām* tendencies began to rise amongst traditionalist elements as well.’⁶³ Khalid Blankinship argues that ‘The decisive *kalām* formulation of Sunnī belief was made by Abu’l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī’.⁶⁴ Majid Fakhry writes:

Abū’l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī (d. 935), the founder of this movement, was a Mu‘tazilite up to the age of forty, when the Prophet, we are told in the classical sources, appeared to him in a dream and urged him to ‘take charge’ of the Muslim community (*ummah*). Thereupon, he mounted the pulpit at the Basrah Mosque and proclaimed his recantation from the ‘follies and scandals’ of the Mu‘tazilah. However, unlike Mālīk Ibn Anas (d. 795) and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, who had repudiated systematic theology (*Kalām*) altogether, al-Ash‘arī continued to favour engaging in theological discourse, as the very title of his famous treatise, *Istiḥsān al Khawd fi ‘Ilm al-Kalām* (The Vindication of the Use of the Science of *Kalām*), clearly implies. In this book, he approves of the use of logical deduction (*qiyās*) on the ground that the Qur’an recommended it and the Prophet himself had practised it. The many references in the Qur’an to the attributes of God, the questions of motion and rest, body and accident, with which the Prophet himself was fully familiar, were proof of this. The Qur’an and Hadith, however, according to al-Ash‘arī, tended to be restrained in their use of methods of deduction, because the Muslim community had not, at that early stage, come into contact with foreign nations or religious creeds or been exposed to the problems and doubts that eventually forced the theologians to resort to them, especially in matters over which the Qur’an and Hadith were silent. It is the duty of every ‘reasonable Muslim’, writes al-Ash‘arī, to refer in such matters ‘to the body of principles, consecrated by reason, sense-experience or common sense’, as well as the explicit pronouncements of the Qur’an and Hadith.

On the more substantive issues that the Mu‘tazilite theologians had raised, al-Ash‘arī tended to tread a middle course between the traditionalists such as Mālīk Ibn Anas and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, and the rationalists such as the Mu‘tazilah and the philosophers. Thus, on the question of divine attributes, he rejected the views of the anthropomorphists (*mushabbihah*) and the corporealists (*mujassimah*), who, like the Shī‘ite Hishām Ibn al-Ḥakam and ‘Abdullah Ibn Karrām, had argued that the divine attributes mentioned in the Qur’an should be taken literally; or who, like Mālīk, regarded questioning them a form of heresy. This famous jurist of Madinah is reported to have said, in answer to the question of whether God ‘sits on the Throne’, as the

Qur'an puts it: 'The sitting is well known, its modality is unknown; believing it is an obligation and questioning it is a heresy (*bid'ah*)'.⁶⁵

Ibn Khaldun, the great historian and sociologist, who is also identified as an Ash'arī theologian,⁶⁶ has analysed the trends of the Ash'arī school in his *Muqaddimah*, as explained by Ahmad Sakhr Ahtar:

The history of the [Ash'arī] school is divided into two periods following the observation of Ibn Khaldūn: *ṭarīqat al-aqdamīn* (the method of the ancients) and *ṭarīqat al-muta'akhkhirīn* (the method of the moderns) whereas al-Ghazālī (505/1111)⁶⁷ is the link between them. According to Frank the first period 'is characterized by the formal language, analysis, and argumentation of the Baṣran *kalām* employed by al-Ash'arī himself, while the second is characterized by the language, concepts, and formal logic of philosophy (*falsafah*), that is, of the Islamic continuation of Greek philosophy'. It is very difficult to give a summary of the main Ash'arite doctrine which covers both periods because of the large number of authors and the diversity of their views, Frank observes that 'Because of the differences in language and conceptualization between the Ash'arī theology of the classical period and that of later times, especially after al-Rāzī, it is impossible to define or characterize the tradition in terms of a single way of conceiving, formulating, and dealing with theological and metaphysical problems'.⁶⁸

Ahtar identifies 'the main representatives of' the first 'method' as: Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'ari, Bāqillānī, Abū Bakr ibn Fūrak,⁶⁹ 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī and Abū 'l-Ma'ālī al-Juwaynī; and 'the main representatives of' the later 'method' as: Ghazzālī, Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī (606/1209), Āmidī, 'Izz ad-Dīn ibn 'Abd as-Salām, Ījī (756/1355). Oliver Leaman gives the following historical overview of the nature of the Ash'arī school:

[T]he Ash'arite school proved far more acceptable to the ulema, quickly developing into a complex system at the hands of thinkers such as Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013), whose *Prolegomena* (*Kitāb al-Tamhīd*) systematically laid out the basic principles of Ash'arism, a process further refined by 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 1037) and probably reaching its completion as an original form of thought in the *Guidance* (*Kitāb al-Irshād*) of al-Juwaynī, to be vigorously defended by al-Shahrastānī (d. 1153), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209), Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. 1142) and 'Adūd al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355). Al-Ghazālī is perhaps too original a thinker to be subsumed completely beneath an Ash'arite or Māturīdite rubric,⁷⁰ but he did a great deal to suggest that it might be possible to integrate *kalām* with other approaches to the question of how to be a Muslim, such as Sufism.⁷¹

Kazi states that ‘It was also al-Bāqillānī who won over many converts to the school, and coined the term “Ash‘arī” to describe the school’.⁷²

El Shamsy notes:

Orthodoxy as a social phenomenon is not a ‘thing’ but rather a process. For theological doctrines to become established as orthodox, they must find a place in the constantly changing net of social relations and institutions that constitute society. This is a two-way process: ideas can reconfigure these relations and institutions, but the social context also actively receives ideas and promotes, channels and/or suppresses them. Thus the history of orthodoxy cannot be simply a history of ideas, but a history of how, in particular situations, claims to truth came to be enshrined in social practices, such as rituals, and in institutions, such as the ‘community of scholars’. . . [In summation,] the social construction of theological orthodoxy took place at the intersection of three primary societal arenas, comprising the scholars, the ordinary believers and the government.⁷³

Likewise, a historical analysis reveals that the story of Ash‘arism’s prominence is a ‘process’ whereby its position as an orthodox and prominent school is established over time, after some significant initial challenges.⁷⁴ The school’s origins were in Basra and Baghdad (the location of the Caliph), yet Baghdad remained, in the words of Kazi, ‘a stronghold of traditionalist thought for over a century, and. . . when Ash‘arism eventually was introduced into the public discourse in Baghdad, it caused a political turmoil of the highest magnitude, so much so that the Caliph himself was forced to intervene and quell the tension’.⁷⁵ I earlier referenced the trial of the Ash‘arīs in Nishapur which required Bayhaqī to write a defence of the followers. Kazi adds:

It was not the followers of al-Ash‘arī in the heartland cities of Baghdad and Basra who would eventually triumph, but rather his followers in the outlying provinces of Nishapur (modern-day Iran). Ash‘arism would be exported from its birthplace of Basra and Baghdad, to the outlying lands of Nishapur, where it would develop and win many converts, some of whom would wield great political might. It was these supporters who would eventually reintroduce a modified and updated version of Ash‘arism in the very cities where it originated from, but this time, rather than being shunned and frowned upon, the new theology, with support from a new government, would supplant and dominate all other theologies, eventually becoming the official theology of the Muslim State. . .

Nishapur eventually became the primary bastion of Ash‘arī thought, producing such luminaries as Ibn Fūrak (d. 406/1015), al-Isfarāʿīnī (d. 418/1027), al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1073), al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1086), and al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). . .⁷⁶

Furthermore, Kazi has given an overview of the historical battles that beset Ash‘arī and his followers from traditionalists who opposed *kalām*: Barbahārī against Ash‘arī in Baghdad;⁷⁷ Ibn Fūrak’s trials at the hands of the Karrāmīs in Rayy, leading to pro-Ash‘arīs in Nishapur inviting him to the city, where he went and taught, but was still opposed by Karrāmīs⁷⁸ in Nishapur;⁷⁹ the *miḥna* of the Ash‘arīs, prompted by Kundurī’s petitions to the Seljuk Sultan;⁸⁰ and the warrant for arrests in 445/1054 of the leading four Ash‘arīs of Nishapur, including Abū ‘l-Qāsim Qushayrī and Juwayni.⁸¹ Kazi states: ‘The *miḥna* lasted until 450/1058, when Alp Arsalān succeeded his father as the governor of Nishapur, and made Nizām al-Mulk his vizier. Alp Arsalān had no sympathy for al-Kundurī; he was initially imprisoned, and eventually executed in 456/1064.’⁸² Kazi then adds: ‘After al-Kundurī’s dismissal, the empty slot of vizier was eventually filled by an individual who would set in place the single most significant change that ever affected the political power of the Ash‘arī school: Nizām al-Mulk. Al-Kundurī’s excessive harshness against the Ash‘arīs would generate a reaction from Nizām al-Mulk that would propel the Ash‘arīs to a level of unprecedented fame and state-power—one that they took advantage of over the course of the next eight centuries.’⁸³ Nevertheless, Nizām al-Mulk’s introduction of his pro-Ash‘arī Nizāmiyya college into Baghdad led to controversy within the city, and his efforts failed to sway the city from traditionalism to Ash‘arism; and the continuing Ash‘arī-traditionalist confrontations led to the Caliph agreeing to wipe the term ‘Ash‘arī’ from the sign outside the Nizāmiyya college in 538/1143.⁸⁴ Kazi helps bring the narrative of the Ash‘arī path to social dominance to a summary:

Through the Nizāmiyya, the teachings of a hitherto small and relatively obscure group spread throughout Muslim lands, and Ash‘arism established itself in cities which previously had been closed to it, in particular, the Islamic capital of Baghdad. Coupled with the intellectual vacuum that had been created by the displacement of the Shī‘ī Buwayhid dynasty in the Arab heartlands, and the Ismā‘īlī Fātimid dynasty in Egypt, along with a complete lack of any alternative network of *madrasas*, the various Nizāmiyyas and the *madrasas* that they spawned were the single most effective and powerful cause for the spread and eventual dominance of Ash‘arī thought in Seljuqic, Ayyūbid, and Mamlūk lands.⁸⁵ The innovative idea introduced by Nizām al-Mulk—controlling the religious class by making it, even if indirectly, dependant on the state—was so successful that it continued to be adopted and implemented throughout the Muslim world.⁸⁶ Perhaps it finally reached its apogee under the Ottomans, where the religious establishment was complete [*sic*] absorbed into the state bureaucracy.⁸⁷

Whilst one can see the executive hand at play in the establishment of a *kalām*-based approach to theology within Muslim society, El Shamsy notes:

The scholarly discourses generated the content of theological orthodoxy: only the *‘ulamā’* were recognised as possessing the competence to make authoritative statements about matters of religion. Attempts by rulers to overrule the consensus of the majority of scholars and to impose a minority theological position by force—such as Ma’mūn’s infamous Inquisition (*miḥna*)—were generally unsuccessful when confronted by determined opposition from the scholarly establishment. However, executive power played a crucial role in promoting and enforcing favoured theological ideas, and in suppressing rival doctrines.

A crucial vehicle for this influence was the government’s right to appoint judges and other public officials who could wield considerable power. Beyond the basic requirement that appointees be recognised scholars and meet the minimum qualifications for office, rulers could select officials based on their school and doctrinal affiliations, and personal beliefs and characteristics, as well as social connections. . . . Similar considerations applied in the appointment of teachers for madrasas that were sponsored by state officials in a nominally private capacity.⁸⁸

By way of re-capping the diversity of the school and the impact of Nizām al-Mulk’s initiatives, Kazi writes:

Like the Mu’tazilis before them, Ash‘arī theologians were not all in agreement regarding the finer details of their theology. The Ash‘arism of al-Bāqillānī was different than that of Ibn Fūrak, and both had different beliefs than that of al-Bayhaqī, who perhaps was the closest of all Ash‘arīs to *Ahl al-Ḥadīth* theology. Al-Juwaynī was the first Ash‘arī to introduce Avicennian concepts into Ash‘arī theology, and from him Ash‘arī theology underwent a revolutionary development, which eventually led to the likes of al-Rāzī, al-Āmidī, and al-Ījī. Had Nizām al-Mulk chosen a more ‘traditional’ Ash‘arī to take charge of the first Nizāmiyya College, that too would have changed the course of Ash‘arī intellectual history. Instead, other strands of Ash‘arism practically died out after the establishment of the Nizāmiyya, and the ‘Juwaynī’ strand was allowed to develop and flourish.⁸⁹

In addition, one can turn to Jackson’s following analysis:

Even as partisan an Ash‘arite Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī would admit that Ash‘arism is more of a method and orientation than a body of doctrine. He points out that many Ash‘arites, e.g., al-Ghazālī’s teacher, al-Juwaynī, and al-Ghazālī, diverged on individual points of doctrine while remaining Ash‘arites.⁹⁰

Leaman defines the late school and its continuation to the present age (in sufficient detail for our purposes here):

Later Ash‘arism was dominated by creeds and their commentaries. The Ash‘arī thinker al-Taftāzānī (d. 1389 or 1390) is particularly worth mentioning for his commentary on Nasafī’s famous ‘*Aqida* or creed, a broadly Māturidī work. Al-Ījī’s work *The Stations* (*al-Mawāqif*) was the subject of many commentaries, of which perhaps the most widely used was the Ash‘arite commentary by al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 1413), which made extensive use of *falsafa*. Like many other works of the late period, Jurjānī’s text is marked by the systematic and detailed use of logic, drawing in particular on a logic manual which was to become standard in the *madrasa* curriculum, *al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya* by Najm al-Dīn al-Kātibī (d. 1276). The late thirteenth-century Ash‘arī theologian, al-Ījī’s teacher ‘Abdallāh al-Bayḍāwī, wrote a handbook entitled *Rising Lights* (*Ṭawālī‘ al-anwār*), which again attracted several commentaries. Abū ‘Alī al-Sanūsī (d. 1490) and Ibrāhīm al-Laḳānī (d. 1641) also authored influential creeds. Such creeds and their commentaries, studied intensively in the *madrasas* until the present day and the subject of innumerable supercommentaries, established a tradition of the production of creeds which laid out the basic principles of Islam in a way which reflects earlier polemics, particularly against Mu‘tazilism, and which provided the commentator and the teacher with the opportunity to display Sunnism as the final resolution of the divisions which rent the early community.⁹¹

In conclusion, although people can rightfully dispute the theological persuasion of the ‘majority’ of the Muslim community, a number of significant religious seminaries of higher learning—such as al-Azhar, Egypt; Zaytūnah, Tunisia; Deoband and Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’, India; and the seminaries of Pakistan—continue to endorse the traditional *kalām* syllabus that Leaman outlines.⁹² Of course, the anti-*kalām* approach can still be observed to have significant support, whether tacit support amongst different strata of society or through its own popular means of knowledge conveyance.⁹³

ON AL-I‘TIQĀD WA’L-HIDĀYAH ILĀ SABĪL AR-RASHĀD

If we use Halverson’s division of *creed* and *theology*, then *al-I‘tiqād wa’l-hidāyah ilā sabīl ar-rashād* is between a creed (like the *Ṭahāwiyyah*) and something that more resembles the later Ash‘ari texts of theology (maybe beginning with something like Juwaynī’s *Irshād*). This is not surprising in light of Bayhaqī being a committed Ash‘arī, hence theologically-inclined in the sense that Halverson perhaps intends; however, his identification with the early Ash‘arī school explains the absence of Hellenic-type logic or philosophy in his work. Like the *Ṭahāwiyyah* and the *Irshād*, the *I‘tiqād* covers the essentials of faith, from those relating to God (*ilāhiyyāt*), prophethood (*nubuwwa*) and the Afterlife (*sam‘iyyāt*), which include the signs heralding the end of time.

Most Muslims are unlikely to find much, if anything, that is strange to general Sunnī beliefs of the community. Of course, those with a particular refined-theological sensibility—whether traditionalist anti-*kalām* or Māturīdī or even late-Ash‘arī—will find points with which to quibble or outright inveigh against. Yet for those who want to study a generally-accepted method of theological expression within the broad *kalām* tradition, this text would be an excellent text to turn to after a study of the *Ṭahāwīyyah*, but before the study of the *Irshād* or something like Maghnīsāwī’s commentary on the *Fiqh al-akbar* that is attributed to Abū Ḥanīfah.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, those with an anti-*kalām* and pro-traditionalist perspective will still find much in the text that accords with their beliefs (including such matters as the previously-discussed *ithbāt* of the divine attributes, in Chapter 8).

The author certainly sees his work as foundational to a vibrant and correct religious life, as he states in the Introduction: ‘I compiled a work on the subject of what the morally responsible needs to know concerning the foundations of knowledge and its derivatives. . . I wanted—and true will is Allah’s ﷻ—to compile a book that includes a clarification of what is obligatory for the morally responsible to believe and profess, along with pointing out some of its evidences in a concise manner, and what should as a rule be kept brief.’ Nonetheless, this work cannot be understood as being an elaboration of the minimum that one is required to believe in order to be a Muslim;⁹⁵ but it is certainly a setting out of many foundational tenets. For example, Chapters 19 and 20 provide a division of essential beliefs and a definition of a Muslim, and what constitutes disbelief. Furthermore, Chapter 24 deals with following essentials and disbelief, as well as references to adhering to the Group, the Saved Sect and the narration of the ummah splitting into various sects.

As with any scholarly Sunnī work, especially one by an eminent Hadith scholar, this work follows a customary method of citation: first, the Qur’ān; second, Hadith; third, opinions of Companions; fourth, opinions of those after the Companions (in particular, his imam, Shāfi‘ī, who features prominently in the work). It is noteworthy that Bayhaqī, as an Ash‘arī, only quotes Ash‘arī in two chapters in our presentation: in relation to the definition of the Qur’ān and God’s speech being ‘uncreated’ (Chapter 10) and the existence of scriptural proof for the validity of Abū Bakr’s caliphate (Chapter 35); and he gives far more precedence to showing that Shāfi‘ī held the theological positions that he is presenting. Shāfi‘ī’s opinion is given distinction in many instances: using the cosmos to establish the existence of the Creator (Chapter 2); that Allah’s names are not other than Him (Chapter 5); the uncreated nature of Allah’s speech (Chapter 10); not asking ‘how?’ and ‘why?’ about the ‘foundation of the Book’ (Chapter 11); establishing the beatific vision (Chapter 12); on the overpowering dominance of Allah’s will (Chapter 16); on children being born with a natural disposition to Islam and

the fate of children from believing parents in the Afterlife (Chapter 17); on faith being based on ‘profession and action; and increases and decreases’ (Chapter 19); the judgement in the Afterlife (Chapter 20); outlining a variety of beliefs at the end of Chapter 23; on the ‘wisdom’ mentioned in the Qur’ān being the Sunnah, the obligation of referring all matters to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and how valid legal differences by qualified jurists is not blameworthy (Chapter 24); the blameworthiness of egotistical debate and heresy (Chapter 25); the necessity of the community having qualified scholars and the superiority of the Messenger’s miracles (Chapter 28); and a confirmation of the Sunnī succession of caliphate for Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī (Chapters 34–6, 38–9). Ultimately, one could be tempted to say that he is more Shāfi‘ī than Ash‘arī in theology in this work, which would support Bayhaqī’s assertion in his letter to the ruler defending the Ash‘aris that it is the creed of the early Muslims.

In sum, the work is very much a collection of narrations, rather than theological musings. Nonetheless, there is some philosophical enquiry, such as the discussion on the nature of the Qur’ān and the divine attributes; but it is minimal. Indeed, it is tempting to say that the work is in keeping with the guidelines set out earlier by Ghazzālī from the *Iljām* and the *Fayṣal*: that the little *kalām* present here is not likely to make the well person ill; but it might be enough of a medicine for a person who is ‘sick’ and has heterodox beliefs, or it may be a stepping-stone for the one who desires to learn Sunnī *kalām* in order to successfully defend the faith, whether for one’s self or for one’s wider community.

Moreover, one is not surprised to see a great scholar of Bayhaqī’s grandeur using hadith from the major collections, especially those of Bukhārī and Muslim; however, one will find, even in the selection included here, that he quotes, with his own chains of transmission, hadith which are not found in the collections that are generally considered to be canonical. Furthermore, one must bear in mind that the bracketed references to certain collections can indicate that a similar hadith has been narrated in that collection to the one that Bayhaqī himself narrates, as opposed to it being a declaration that the hadith has been narrated in the said collection with the exact same wording. For example, in Chapter 24, Bayhaqī narrates ‘On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The Jews split into 71 sects, and likewise the Christians. My community will split into 73 sects’”’ This is first referenced here in the translation, based on the version edited in Arabic by Abū ‘Abdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī ‘l-‘Aynayn, to *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*; however, there are some differences in the chain of transmission and text between the two. Bayhaqī’s chain is through different narrators at the later stages in comparison to Abū Dāwūd, although the beginning of both narrations is the same: Muḥammad ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Alqamah—Abū Salamah—Abū Hurayrah ؓ. Moreover, the text given by Abū Dāwūd reads: ‘The Jews

split into 71 or 72 sects; the Christians split into 71 or 72 sects; and my community will split into 73 sects.’⁹⁶

The translated work is not a complete translation of the original, but was abridged by the translator Nasir Abdussalam, so as to avoid unnecessary repetition or unnecessary linguistic analysis. In a couple of places, I added my own translation of some missing Arabic passages. In addition, the translator has added the synopsis of Bayhaqī’s *al-I’tiqād* by the contemporary Jordanian theologian Saeed Fodeh,⁹⁷ and it is here included as an appendix.

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ANDREW BOOSO

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1 Shams ad-Dīn Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Uthmān adh-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa wafayāt al-mashāhīr wa’l-a’lām*, ed. Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma’rūf (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1424/2003), 10:95.

2 For a technical definition of *ḥāfiẓ*, which entails a person being known for seeking the audition and reading of hadith with the scholars of the science, as well as intimate knowledge of the narrators whereby one can distinguish the authentic from the inauthentic narrations, whilst also memorising many texts, see Mohammad Akram Nadwi, *Mabādī’ fī uṣūl al-Ḥadīth wa’l-isnād* (Oxford: Al-Salam Institute Press, 1436/2015), 11.

3 Tāj ad-Dīn Abī Naṣr ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Kāfī as-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfi‘iyyah al-kubrā*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad Ḥilw and Maḥmūd Muḥammad aṭ-Ṭanāḥī (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah, n.d.), 4:8.

4 See Lane’s *Lexicon*, under *w-ḥ-d*, at ejtaal.net (accessed 3 August 2016).

5 Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, 10:95.

6 Shams ad-Dīn Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Uthmān Dhahabī, *Siyar a’lām an-nubalā’*, eds. Shu‘ayb al-Arna’ūt and Muḥammad Na‘īm al-‘Araqsūsī (Beirut: Mu’assasat ar-Risālah, 1405/1984), 18:163.

7 This is a person who has profound knowledge of the chains of transmission and texts of hadith, and the names of the narrators. See Nadwi, *Mabādī’*, 10. For a full definition of this

term from Sakhāwī, see Gibril Fouād Ḥaddād, *The Four Imams and their Schools* (n.l.: Muslim Academic Trust, n.d.), 430–433.

8 Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4:8 and 3:395.

9 There is more on such ‘orthodoxy’ later.

10 Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunnī Ḥadīth Canon* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 219.

11 For a list of his many works, see Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 18:165–7; Bayhaqī, *Allah’s Names and Attributes (Al-Asma’ wa al-Sifat)*, *Excerpts*, trans. Gibril Fouad Haddad (Fenton, MI: As-Sunna Foundation of America, 1999), 5–7; ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ad-Dihlawī, *The Garden of the Ḥadīth Scholars*, trans. Aisha Bewley (London: Turath, 2007), 152.

12 Ibid.

13 Stated by Dhahabī in the *Tārīkh* and cited by Subkī in the *Ṭabaqāt*; translation given in Bayhaqī, *Allah’s Names*, 4.

14 Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, 10:95–6. The translation of Juwaynī’s words is from Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri, *Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*, trans. Nuh Ha Mim Keller (Evanston, IL: Sunna Books, 1994), 1042.

15 Brown, *Canonization*, 219–220.

16 On this point, Kazi notes: ‘I am aware of G. Makdisi’s claims, throughout his articles, that *madrasas* were primarily legal institutions devoid of any theological leanings. The evidence, however, seems to suggest otherwise’. Yasir Kazi, ‘Reconciling Reason and Revelation in the Writings of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328): An Analytical Study of Ibn Taymiyya’s *Dar’ al-ta’āruḍ*’ (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 2013), 30.

17 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 29–30.

18 Jan Thiele writes: ‘There is a wide scholarly consensus that Ash‘arism entered a new phase in the sixth/twelfth century, marked by an increasing influence of Avicennan philosophy, a transition generally associated with the prominent thinker Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī’; see Jan Thiele, ‘Between Cordoba and Nisābūr: The Emergence and Consolidation of Ash‘arism (Fourth–Fifth/Tenth–Eleventh Century)’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Theology*, ed. Sabine Schmidtke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 225.

19 Ibid. 220.

20 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 33.

21 Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3:384–5.

22 Ibid. 3:389 and 3:394.

23 For an English translation of this selection, see Haddad’s translation in Bayhaqī, *Allah’s Names*, 15–17. For the complete discussion, see Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3:361–5.

24 See Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 31–44; Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Mūsā al-Bayhaqī, *al-I’tiqād wa’l-hidāyah ilā sabīl ar-rashād*, ed. Abū ‘Abdullāh Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Abī ‘l-‘Aynayn (Riyadh: Dār al-Faḍīlah li’n-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī‘, 1420/1999), 11 (editor’s foreword); Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3:363 and 3:395–399.

25 This is a reference to ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Asad at-Tamīmī, Abū ‘l-Faḍl al-Baghdādī al-Ḥanbalī (d. 410 AH). Dhahabī says, ‘He was favourably disposed to Ash‘ari.’ Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, 9:152–3. Ibn Taymiyya includes Abū ‘l-Faḍl amongst the ‘Tamīmīs’ who are ‘furthest (*ab‘ad*) from *ithbāt*’. See Bayhaqī, *I’tiqād*, 12 (editor’s quotation). See later for

details of Ḥanbalī involvement in *kalām*, with reference to Ibn al-Jawzī and Jeffry R. Halverson's analysis.

26 See Bayhaqī, *I'tiqād*, 11–12 (editor's quotations).

27 Dhahabī, *Tārīkh*, 10:95.

28 Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4:11.

29 Bayhaqī, *Allah's Names*, 6 (translator's introduction).

30 Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4:11–12; Dihlawī, *The Garden*, 151.

31 One can find an introductory overview in: *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Majid Fakhry, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2000), 13–20, 63–8; Kazi, 'Reconciling', 8–15; and *The Oxford Handbook*. By way of summary, Khalid Blankinship writes: '*Kalām*, originally just meaning "speech" or "talk," had arisen in the sense of philosophical discourse on Islam in the 2nd/8th century, when Muslims, getting into more religious arguments now with Christians and other non-Muslims, began to use logical arguments to defend their faith.' See Blankinship's Introduction in 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Jawzī, *The Attributes of God*, trans. 'Abdullah bin Hamid Ali (Bristol: Amal, 2006), xv.

On the Western academic literature on the subject, see Mustafa Shah, 'Trajectories in the Development of Islamic Theological Thought: the Synthesis of *Kalām*', *Religion Compass* 1/4 (2007): 430–454. The early antipathy towards *kalām* is seen in the many condemnations of it by major early scholars, such as Abū Yūsuf, Mālik, Shāfi'ī and Aḥmad. As such, later proponents of a Sunnī *kalām* would seek to contextualise and explain such condemnation. For instance, Ghazzālī, as quoted by 'Alī Qārī, sought to argue that *kalām* has extremes: 1) those who consider it a blameworthy innovation and hence forbidden; 2) those who deem it to be obligatory; see 'Alī Qārī's discussion included in an abridged form in Abu 'l-Muntahā al-Maghnisāwī, *Imām Abū Ḥanīfa's al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, trans. Abdur-Rahman ibn Yusuf (Santa Barbara, CA: White Thread Press, 2007), 56–60. More on Ghazzālī's position about *kalām* later.

Shah provides a useful overview of the state of the field of studies on Islamic theology: 'Current scholarship is therefore only beginning to tap into *kalām*'s rich reservoir of materials. Van Ess once remarked in 1973 that Islamic studies "are one century behind Latin medieval studies". In what is quite clearly a moderate estimate, he added that there exists around two million Arabic or Persian manuscripts in the world; and that there were "some 500,000 in Istanbul alone". He stated that only a very small portion of these has been printed. Western academic studies in fields such as Islamic theology have naturally progressed since these remarks were made. Of course, one must bear in mind that the recent academic endeavour of the Arabic and Islamic world in the field of theology and the related Islamic sciences is immense: notwithstanding the numerous critical editions of theological manuscripts, there exists a profusion of texts, theses and dissertations devoted to all aspects of theology. Yet, such sources are hardly given the Western academic attention they clearly warrant'; see Shah, 'Trajectories', 443–4. On 16 January 2016, Wael Hallaq, during a seminar (session 2) at Birkbeck University, London, on his monograph *The Impossible State*, hosted by Islamic Courses, remarked that '[not] more than one percent of manuscripts [from the Muslim world] are printed', with a real dearth of works on classical 'scientific' theory and ethics (*akhlāq*) from that period.

32 Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Mayyārah al-Mālikī, *ad-Durr ath-thamīn wa'l-mawrid al-mu'īn*, ed. 'Abdullāh al-Minshāwī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1429/2008), 29.

33 Muhammad Salih Farfur, *The Beneficial Message & The Definitive Proof in the Study of Theology*, trans. Wesam Charkawi (n.l.: n.p., 2010), 47.

34 Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*, trans. S. M. Hasan al-Banna (Swansea: Awakening, 2002), 26.

35 See Sa'īd Foudah, *A Refined Explanation of the Sanusi Creed The Foundational Proofs*, trans. Suraqah Abdul Aziz (Rotterdam: Sunni Publications, 2013), 49.

Shah writes: 'The field of Islamic theology (*kalām*) is not merely a receptacle for the presentation of the creedal statements and doctrinal catechisms of Islam; it derives its *raison d'être* not only from the articulation and elucidation of the doctrines of faith, but also by means of its rational and painstaking explication of dogma. While many of the dogmatic statements expressed in Islamic theology naturally emanate from a traditional substratum, countless more are the result of dialectical discussions as theologians expounded upon abstract constructs of religious dogma.' See Shah, 'Trajectories', 430.

Jeffrey R. Halverson makes the distinction between 'theology proper' (*ilm al-kalam*, i.e. "scholastic," "dialectic," or "systematic" theology) and 'axiomatic religious creeds, known in the singular form as *aqidah* ("creed").' Halverson makes the additional point: 'Through a complex confluence of events and popular rebuke, *kalam* fell into steady decline during the waning of the 'Abbasid Caliphate and then into virtual extinction as an active discipline by the fifteenth century (CE), replaced by a distinctly creedal enterprise. Yet, even in its absence, virtually every aspect of Islamic thought has continued to operate under a set of implicit theological postulates that, in turn, dictate and define the parameters of all ensuing discourse. . . Works of theology (*kalam*) contain proofs, expositions, and rebuttals of the doctrines and arguments of one's doctrinal opponents. Creeds (*'aqā'id*), on the other hand, are merely statements of the proper articles of belief (*usul al-dīn*), and are generally intended to tell us *what* to believe but not *how* or *why*. . . where there is agreement in *creedal* forms, there may be disagreement in *theological* forms.' See Jeffrey R. Halverson, *Theology and Creed in Sunni Islam: The Muslim Brotherhood, Ash'arism and Political Islam* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 1–2, 53. Halverson's 'four factors in *kalam* decline' are: '(1) the persistence and popular influence of the Athari anti-theological movement; (2) the blurring of the boundaries between *kalām* and *falsafah*; (3) the growth of Islamic mysticism, known as Sufism; (4) the "creedal collapse" that emerged out of the Sunni solidarity movement during the Mamluk era' (44–5, and the rest of his Chapter 2 for its elaboration).

On the choice of 'speculative theology' as a translation for *ilm al-kalām*, Paul Walker makes the valid point that for Sunnis, like the Ash'arite Juwaynī in his *Irshād*, 'Islamic theology' is not a 'speculative venture': 'Al-Juwaynī quite obviously did not engage in speculation in matters involving religious doctrine, especially those that refer to God. God is not a subject for human speculation in any sense. In fact, according to al-Juwaynī, the principles of belief rest on a foundation based on convincing proofs, proofs quite soundly demonstrated and anchored in revelation. What is speculative in Islamic theology is inevitably the fantasies of those who deviate from this exacting standard. Therefore speculative theology did not and does not exist in orthodox Islam but rather finds a place only among the heretics, the sceptics and the misguided'; Imām al-Ḥaramayn al-Juwaynī, A

Guide to Conclusive Proofs for the Principles of Belief: Kitāb al-irshād ilā qawāṭi' al-adilla fī uṣūl al-i'tiqād, trans. Paul E. Walker (Reading: Garnet, 2000), xxvii.

36 For a discussion of such distinctions, see Hossein Modarressi, 'Essential Islam: The Minimum that a Muslim is Required to Acknowledge', in *Accusations of Unbelief in Islam: A Diachronic Perspective on Takfir*, eds. Camilla Adang et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), whereby he discusses how 'Sunnī Islam came to represent a multitude of opinions on how to define a Muslim and set a dividing line between faith and unfaith' (402). The latter revolved around the Sunni theological principle: 'Any Muslim who rejects or denies a matter that is commonly known to be a precept of Islam, "a clearly established law of Islam," is considered an apostate even if the person verbally adheres to the Muslim faith' (403). Modarressi adds: 'It is thus not uncommon to see an additional proviso in the formal definition of a "Muslim" in both Sunnī and Shī'ite traditions: A Muslim is one who acknowledges the two testimonies of Islamic creed, that there is no god except Allāh and that Muḥammad is His messenger, and does not reject commonly known and clearly established precepts of Islam, "the essential components of religion" (*al-ḍarūri min al-dīn*) as they term it' (403–4). In addition, he writes: 'Others identified the indispensable minimum as features that Islam is known to stand for in the eyes of everyone, Muslims and non-Muslims alike; in other words, the trademarks of Islam and major values that it is known to primarily stand for, including presumably the unity of God, the prophethood of Muḥammad, the Qur'ān as scripture, Mecca as the heart of the Islamic community, the mosque as the place of worship, prayer and fasting as religious rituals, prohibition of wine and pork as well as immoral acts like incest and adultery as normally expected from a religion' (404). Moreover, Modarressi writes, 'There was also a concept known in the both traditions as *qaṭ'iyyāt*, absolute certainties or indisputable facts' (406).

Nawawī writes: 'Any Muslim who denies something that is necessarily known to be of the religion of Islam is adjudged a renegade and an unbeliever unless he is a recent convert or was born and raised in the wilderness or for some similar reason has been unable to learn his religion properly. Muslims in such a condition should be informed about the truth, and if they then continue as before, they are adjudged non-Muslims, as is also the case with any Muslim who believes it permissible to commit adultery, drink wine, kill without right, or do other acts that are necessarily known to be unlawful'. Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, as cited in *Reliance of the Traveller*, 809.

37 Sherman A. Jackson, *The Theological Boundaries of Islamic Tolerance: Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī's Fayṣal al-Tafriqa Bayna al-Islām wa al-Zandaqa* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 112.

38 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Ghunaymī al-Maydānī al-Ḥanafī ad-Dimashqī, *Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah at-Taḥāwīyyah*, eds. Muḥammad Muṭī' al-Ḥāfiẓ and Muḥammad Riyāḍ al-Mālīḥ (Damascus and Beirut: Dār al-Fikr and Dār al-Fikr al-Mu'āṣir, 1423/2002), 44–5. The translation of Najm al-Ghazzī has been slightly amended from *al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, 17.

Suhaib Hasan comments on the hadith of the 73 Sects: 'Numerous narrations of this hadith are found in the collections of Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, al-Hakim, Ahmad and others: they vary in being *Saḥīḥ*, *Hasan*, or *Da'if*, but the hadith is established. Among those who have authenticated this hadith are al-Tirmidhi, al-Hakim, al-Shatibi, Ibn Taimiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim, al-Dhahabi, Ibn Kathir, Ibn Hajar and al-'Iraqi. Most narrations mention the splitting-up of the Jews and the Christians into seventy-one or seventy-two sects, all being in

the Fire except one, prior to mention of the Muslims dividing even more. In some of the narrations, the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) describes the Saved Sect variously as “the Jama’ah (community, congregation, main body)”, “the largest body (al-sawad al-a’zam)” and “that which follows what I and my Companions are upon.” The hadith does not mean that the majority of Muslims will be in the Hellfire, for most of them (“the masses”) are not involved in intentional, divisive innovation; further, mention of the Fire does not necessarily imply that the seventy-two sects will remain there forever, or that those sects are disbelievers.’ See Suhaib Hasan, *An Introduction to the Science of Hadith* (e-book). For a citation of the relevant hadiths to this topic and details on their narrations, see Abdul Rahmaan ibn Mualaa al-Luwaihiq al-Mutairi, *Religious Extremism in the Lives of Contemporary Muslims*, trans. Jamaal al-Din M. Zarabozo (Denver, CO: Al-Basheer, 2001), 198–202. The one popular term that has not been mentioned so far in relation to describing the Group in our discussion is ‘the Victorious Group’ (*aṭ-Ṭā’ifah al-manṣūrah*); *ibid.* 202.

39 Regarding the narration about the community not concurring on error, ‘Alī Muḥammad Dandal traces it to the collections of Hākim and Ṭabarānī (in his *Kabīr*). See ‘Alī Qārī al-Ḥanafī, *Sharḥ kitāb al-Fiqh al-akbar*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Dandal (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 7–8 (footnotes).

40 I put these descriptive words together because they are often synonymous with each other in the modern world, especially in Saudi Arabia and perceptions of the country thereof.

41 Translation made from the Arabic quote cited at <<https://islamqa.info/ar/90112>> (accessed 12 August 2016).

42 Translation made from the Arabic quote cited at <<https://islamqa.info/ar/10121>> (accessed 13 August 2016).

43 Al-Hārith al-Muḥāsibī, *Risālat al-mustarshidīn*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah (Beirut: Maktab al-Maṭbū‘āt al-Islāmiyyah, 1426/2005), 189–191; Hārith al-Muḥāsibī, *The Sunnah Way of the Sufis*, trans. Mahomed Mahomed (Karachi: Zam Zam, 2006), 243–6.

44 My preferable translation of *ahl al-ḥall wa’l-‘aqd* is something like ‘those with discretionary power to enact or dissolve a pact’. Nawawī defines this group as consisting of ‘scholars, leaders, and notables’. See *Reliance of the Traveller*, 642.

45 Although theological treatises, such as the *Ṭaḥāwīyya*, will disavow ‘rebellion against our Imām or those in charge of our affairs even if they are unjust’ (Abū Ja’far aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī, *Islamic Belief: Al-Aqīdah aṭ-Ṭaḥāwīyah*, trans. Iqbal Ahmad Azami (Leicester: UK Islamic Academy, 2002), 15), one sees legal doctrine that makes that simplistic picture more complex, in light of a ruler not praying the obligatory prayers or calling people to them, or altering the Sacred Law with conviction in the validity of such alterations; see *Reliance of the Traveller*, 640.

46 Luwaihiq, *Religious Extremism*, 188–204. Luwaihiq quotes Jafar Shaykh Idrīs saying that ‘it is clear that “the *jamaah* mentioned in the hadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cannot be restricted to only one of the Islamic groups that exist today”’. Luwaihiq goes on to argue that this ‘extremism’ of viewing one’s little group as the *jamā’ah* is an extremism witnessed in the work of Sa‘īd Hawwā of the Muslim Brotherhood and Shukrī Muṣṭafā who founded the group known as at-Takfīr wa’l-Hijrah; and such extremes can lead to one wrongly anathematising Muslims because they do not belong to one’s small group which has had the temerity to call itself ‘the Group’; *ibid.* 204–212 and 319–325.

47 Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward the Third Resurrection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 111.

48 Jackson writes: ‘following the failed attempt of the early Umayyads to perpetuate a system that reduced all non-Arabians to second-class citizenship, once a people adopted the Arabic language and certain cultural traits, they became fully-fledged Arabs, equal in their Arabness to the original conquerors. This is what occurred with the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Sudanese, the North Africans, and others. This obtained whether the adoption occurred through force, choice, or osmosis. In this capacity, Arabicized peoples often ended up superceding the “original” Arabs in intellectual, artistic, and other pursuits, including the acquisition of power, as occurred, for example, Abū Nawās in Arab poetry, al-Ghazali in Muslim theology, Abū Ḥanifa in Islamic law, or the famous Barmakid family of politicians.’ Ibid. 110–111.

49 Sherman A. Jackson, *Islam & the Problem of Black Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 27–9 and 31–2. In addition, Oliver Leaman states: ‘In Western accounts these two groups of thinkers are sometimes called Rationalists and Traditionalists (terms commended by Abrahamov and Makdisi, among others), but these labels are not always helpful. It is not that some scholars known as Traditionalists favoured irrationality, or that “Rationalists” did not use the hadith; it was more a matter of emphasis than a difference in kind. The way in which these two approaches developed came to be subsumed under *uṣūl al-dīn*, the “roots of religion”, which until the eleventh century tended to be rather thin philosophically but placed the emphasis on understanding the structure of religion and how its different areas of discourse were related.’ See Oliver Leaman, ‘The developed *kalām* tradition’, in *The Cambridge Companion*, 81

50 For traditionalists, see p. 30, fn. 2.

51 For succinct overviews of these three schools, see the relevant chapters in Jackson, *Islam and the Problem of Black Suffering*.

52 Ahmed El Shamsy, ‘The social construction of orthodoxy’, in *The Cambridge Companion*, 107.

53 Halverson, *Theology*, 14. The nature of the early historical antagonism between Ash‘arīs and Māturīdīs is sufficiently laid out in Ulrich Rudolph, *Al-Māturīdī and the Development of Sunnī Theology in Samarqand*, trans. Rodrigo Adem (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015). In addition, Lutz Berger, in his ‘Interpretations of Ash‘arism and Māturīdism in Mamluk and Ottoman Times’, in *The Oxford Handbook*, sets out how early antagonism led to eventual mutual respect.

54 S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Saviours of the Islamic Spirit*, trans. Mohiuddin Ahmad (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1986), 1:98. Halverson states: ‘Wilfred Madelung has written, “Maturidism, in contrast to Ash‘arism, did not arouse any attention among other theological circles for over a century after the death of its founder [in the tenth century]”’; *Theology*, 23.

55 Berger, ‘Interpretations’, 697–8.

56 ‘Traditionalists’ are sometimes called ‘Hanbalis’ (*The Cambridge Companion*: Winter, 7; Blankinship, 54; Leaman, 81) or ‘Atharis’ (Halverson, *Theology*, 34). In defence of the use of ‘Hanbali’ as a term of reference for this traditionalist form of theology, ‘in around 450/1058, the Ash‘arī theologian Abū Ishāq al-Shirāzī laments that many “ignorant” Shāfi‘īs follow the school in legal matters, but are “Hanbali” in issues of theology. . . Many of the early Shāfi‘īs

were clearly anti-*kalām* in their discourses, including the first batch that introduced the legal school to Nishapur. See: W. Madelung, *Religious Trends in Early Islamic Iran*’; Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 23.

In contrast, Halverson notes: ‘Conversely, when we look at Hanbalism too, we can see quite clearly that it is incorrect to consider Hanbalism and “Atharism” to be synonymous. The works of Hanbalite scholars such as Ibn ‘Aqil (d. 1119 CE), Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 1201 CE), and Najm al-Din al-Tufi (d. 1316 CE), among a few others, reveal instances of distinctly theological ideas occurring within Hanbalism, making it a far more diverse tradition than one may otherwise suspect. However, the overwhelming majority of Hanbalites did indeed fall firmly within the Athari camp with its unyielding rejection of theology. . . The Atharis can thus be described as a school or movement led by a contingent of scholars (*ulama*), typically Hanbalite or even Shafi‘ite, that retained influence, or at the very least a shared sentiment and conception of piety, well beyond the limited range of Hanbalite communities. This body of scholars continued to reject theology in favour of strict textualism well after Ash‘arism had infiltrated the Sunni schools of law. It is for these reasons that we must delineate the existence of a distinctly traditionalist, anti-theological movement, which defies strict identification with any particular *madhhab*, and therefore cannot be described as Hanbalite’; *Theology*, 35–6.

Earlier, there was reference to Ibn Taymiyya speaking of the “Tamīmīs” of the Ḥanbalī school who did not do *ithbāt* of the attributes of God; and Dhahabī spoke of Abū ‘l-Faḍl at-Tamīmī being favourably disposed to Ash‘arī. Moreover, there is Ibn al-Jawzī’s polemic against his fellow Ḥanbalīs from the perspective of the school of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal itself, entitled *Daf‘ shubah at-tashbih bi-akaff at-tanzih*. Ibn al-Jawzī writes: ‘I have observed that some of our [Ḥanbalī] companions have written about matters of creed in a way that is not proper. There are three in particular: Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥāmid, his disciple Qāḍī Abū Ya‘lā, and Ibn al-Zāghūnī [Ibn al-Jawzī’s his own teacher] who composed books by which they have disgraced the [Ḥanbalī] *madhhab*. They held the attributes of God to be subject to human understanding and perception. . . You have made this *madhhab* such a shameful disgrace that when it is said “Ḥanbalī,” it is understood that he is someone who likens God to His creation.’ He further quotes Rizqullāh Abū Muḥammad at-Tamīmī as criticising one of the leaders from these Ḥanbalīs, by saying: ‘[He] has disgraced the *madhhab* in a terrible way and it will not be cleansed until the Day of Resurrection.’ Unsurprisingly, Gibril Haddad notes how later Ḥanbalīs such as Muwaffaq ad-Dīn ibn Qudāmah, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Rajab criticised Ibn al-Jawzī’s work on the divine attributes (as did the Shāfi‘ī traditionalist Dhahabī). See Ibn al-Jawzī, *The Attributes of God*, 4–5, 22, 42 and 45–6. For more on Ibn al-Jawzī’s contentions with his fellow Ḥanbalīs on the subject of God’s attributes, see Merlin Swartz, *A Medieval Critique of Anthropomorphism: Ibn al-Jawzī’s Kitāb Akhbār aṣ-Ṣifāt* (Leiden: Brill, 2002). I am also grateful to Rodrigo Adem for confirming to me the widespread utilisation of *kalām* amongst what I would identify as ‘classical’ Ḥanbalīs; personal communication, 4 August 2016.

57 El Shamsy, ‘The social construction’, 110.

58 Halverson, *Theology*, 34–5.

59 Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī, *A Return to a Purity in Creed*, trans. ‘Abdullāh bin Ḥāmid ‘Alī (Philadelphia, PA: Lamp Post Productions, 2008), 35–6, 116, 120–1.

60 Jackson, *Boundaries*, 123.

61 Nawawī, *al-Majmūʿ*, as cited in *Reliance of the Traveller*, 9.

62 Fakhry, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism*, 20.

63 Kazi, 'Reconciling', 16.

64 Khalid Blankinship, 'The early creed', in *The Cambridge Companion*, 52.

65 Fakhry, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism*, 64–5.

66 Leaman, 'The developed *kalām* tradition', 86.

67 See the later footnote on the complexity surrounding Ghazzālī's identification with the Ashʿarī school.

68 Ahmad Sakhr Achtar, 'Contact Between Theology, Hermeneutics and Literary Theory: The Role of Majāz in the Interpretation of Anthropomorphic Verses in the Qurʾān from the 2nd AH/8th CE Until the 7th AH/13th CE' (Ph.D. diss., SOAS, University of London, 2012), 232–3. Delfina Serrano Ruano writes: 'Concerning Ashʿarism, Ibn Khaldūn identifies al-Juwaynī's *Irshād* as the best handbook for the school's doctrine. Further, he states that the Ashʿarite theologians' adoption of logic brought about a new argumentative technique which came to be known as "method of the modern ones (*ṭarīqat al-mutaʾakhhirīn*)" having in al-Ghazālī and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) its most important representatives. Al-Juwaynī, for his part, is considered to have acted as a hinge between the method elaborated by al-Bāqillānī and that of the "modern ones". The implementation of the new methodology to the rules formulated by al-Ashʿarī and the first generations of his followers, especially al-Bāqillānī, led to the replacement of a significant part of their teachings by doctrines stemming from philosophical discussions about physics and metaphysics. Ibn Khaldūn states that logic enabled the Ashʿarites to jump from debating with the Muʿtazilites and the anthropomorphists to refuting the quintessence of rational thinkers, i.e. the philosophers. However, plunging into this latter discipline in order to oppose its practitioners in an effective manner led to confusion between *kalām* and philosophy, due to the false assumption on the part of the *mutakallimūn* that both disciplines shared the same object. Certainly, Ibn Khaldūn acknowledges that logic can be studied independently from philosophy and that its use as a mere pattern or rule to demonstrate the accuracy of a certain argument made it possible to overcome the simplicity of the early Ashʿarites and the shortcomings of their argumentative technique. Yet he laments the syncretism in which fell the "modern ones", for which reason he rejects them, showing rather his preference for al-Bāqillānī and al-Juwaynī.' See Delfina Serrano Ruano, 'Later Ashʿarism in the Islamic West', in *The Oxford Handbook*, 527–8.

69 Achtar uses 'Fawrak'; Achtar, 'Contact', 232. Kazi notes the importance of Ashʿarī's student Abū ʿl-Ḥasan al-Bahili, who taught Bāqillani and Ibn Furak; Kazi, 'Reconciling', 21.

70 Regarding the characterisation of Ghazzālī and its debate in Western academia, Shah writes: 'Frank provoked debate for his suggestion that the accepted commitment of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 555/1111) to Ashʿarite theology was "tenuous in the extreme". He identified doctrinal inconsistencies found in al-Ghazālī's works such as his position on causality, occasionalism, and the metaphysics of resurrection, claiming that obfuscation and vagueness marked al-Ghazālī's relationship with the Ashʿarite school. Frank speculated that there existed a higher level of theological understanding that defined Ghazālī's position. Referring to arguments outlined by Frank, Michael Marmura and Toby Mayer both produced studies that demonstrated that al-Ghazālī's commitment to Ashʿarism was unquestionable, refuting Frank's interpretation of the sources.' Shah, 'Trajectories', 443.

Nonetheless there is a caveat with placing Ghazzālī within the Ash‘arī school: any adherence to common positions was due to conviction and not mere passive imitation (*taqlīd*). For instance, in *Fayṣal at-tafriqah*, he responds to those Ash‘aris who criticised him for not holding similar positions to Ash‘arī himself on certain topics: ‘If he claims that the definition of “Unbelief” is what contradicts the Ash‘arite school, or the Mu‘tazilite school, or the Ḥanbalite school, or any other school, then know that he is a gullible, dim-witted fellow who is stifled by his enslavement to blind following [*taqlīd*] [. . .] Why should al-Bāqillānī be more deserving to be branded an Unbeliever for going against the Ash‘arite school than the Ash‘arites would be for going against al-Bāqillānī? [. . .] If, on the other hand, it is permissible for al-Bāqillānī to go against the Ash‘arite school, why should this be denied to others? What is the difference between al-Bāqillānī and al-Karābīsī or al-Qalānisī and others?’ See Jackson, *Boundaries*, 88–9; Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazzālī, *Majmū‘at rasā’il al-Imām al-Ghazzālī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2006), 3:77.

71 Leaman, ‘The developed *kalām* tradition’, 84.

72 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 21. Thiele writes: ‘Since the beginnings of Ash‘arite studies, modern scholars have highlighted al-Bāqillānī’s central role in the consolidation of the school. This perception was significantly shaped by Ibn Khaldūn’s account of the history of Ash‘arism in his *Muqaddima*. Although Ibn Khaldūn’s report includes some imprecisions, it is beyond any doubt that al-Bāqillānī significantly contributed to the evolution of the school’s teachings by broadening its conceptual framework and by further developing ideas of the school’s founder’; Thiele, ‘Between Cordoba and Nīsābūr’, 231. In relation to the continuity and changes within the Ash‘arī school and its internal mechanisms and relationship with the wider scholarly community, Shah writes: ‘George Makdisi, passionately argued that the seemingly close association between orthodoxy and Ash‘arism was unduly accentuated in the history of Islamic theology. Makdisi emphasised that the brand of scholastic *kalām* championed by Ash‘arism was never fully accepted within classical Sunni orthodoxy. . . Makdisi asserted that al-Ash‘ari was no advocate of the variety of theology that later prevailed within the school, alleging that his students and their disciples were the true authors of this brand of scholastic thought. . . Makdisi’s thesis was criticised by a respected academic authority on Ash‘arism and classical Islamic theology, Richard Frank. He contended that the extant works authored by al-Ash‘ari display theological leanings that were generally commensurate with the doctrinal positions taken by later theologians of the school. Makdisi had alleged that several of the works ascribed to al-Ash‘ari were products of the preconversion period and reflected a predisposition to Mu‘tazilite inspired precepts; the issue seemingly turned on the question of ascription. Frank retorted that there existed texts which were composed by Ash‘ari after his “conversion” reflecting the same rational outlook. Certainly, the works of early luminaries of the Ash‘arite school such as the *Mujarrad Maqālāt al-shaykh Abī’l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī* (the *Essential Theological Doctrines of Abū’l-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī*), composed by Ibn Fūrak (348–406/941–1015 CE), were predicated on their epitomising the irrefutable theological teachings of al-Ash‘ari.’ Shah, ‘Trajectories’, 442.

73 *The Cambridge Companion*, 97 and 115.

74 For an overview of the development of the early school, one can see—in addition to the points made subsequently—Thiele, ‘Between Cordoba and Nīsābūr’.

75 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 21. For details on the Caliph’s support for theological traditionalism in Baghdad during this early period and the dominance of traditionalism, see *ibid.* 51–3.

76 Ibid. 22–3.

77 Ibid. 19.

78 For a discussion of this group, see Aron Zysow, ‘Karrāmiyya’, in *The Oxford Handbook*.

79 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 29.

80 Ibid. 31–2.

81 Kazi describes Juwayni as ‘the single undisputed leader of the Ash‘arī-Shāfi‘ī faction of Nishapur during the reign of Nizām al-Mulk. For over thirty years, he was given free reign to teach and preach in the city, having been handed the directorship of the first Nizāmiyyah in Nishapur, and of the large Māni‘ī Mosque of the city. He was the primary teacher and mentor of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.’ Ibid. 33. El Shamsy also refers to similar instances of ‘civic conflict’ as Ash‘arism struggled in this early period; ‘The social construction’, 111.

82 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 34.

83 Ibid. 43–4.

84 Ibid. 64.

85 On this point, Kazi notes: ‘Makdisi’s final thesis [in G. Makdisi, “Ash‘arī and the Ash‘arīs in Islamic Religious History I,”], that the Ash‘arī school suffered an eventual decline during al-Subkī’s era. . . , seems rather tenuous given the power that the school wielded during Ibn Taymiyya’s time’; Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 78.

86 On the importance of Nizām al-Mulk’s sponsorship of Ash‘arism, see El Shamsy, ‘The social construction’, 113.

87 Kazi, ‘Reconciling’, 77–8.

88 El Shamsy, ‘The social construction’, 112–3.

89 Juwayni’s importance as signifying a ‘second phase of Ash‘arism’ was mentioned to me by Rodrigo Adem; personal correspondence, 4 August 2016.

90 Jackson, *Boundaries*, 79. This point was exemplified earlier with reference to Ghazzālī’s theological independence and arguments with his fellow Ash‘arīs.

91 Leaman, ‘The developed *kalām* tradition’, 85–6. For more on the Ash‘arī school in both the early and late periods, see, in particular, the following in *The Oxford Handbook*: Heidrun Eichner, ‘Handbooks in the Tradition of Later Eastern Ash‘arism’; Delfina Serrano Ruano, ‘Later Ash‘arism in the Islamic West’; Aaron Spevack, ‘Egypt and the Later Ash‘arite School’; Lutz Berger, ‘Interpretations of Ash‘arism and Māturidism in Mamluk and Ottoman Times’.

92 See <<http://www.virtualmosque.com/multimedia/video/unity-in-action-shaykh-al-qaradawi-defends-the-creed-of-al-azhar-university/>> (accessed 11 September 2016).

93 The anti-*kalām* voices are often tied to the worldwide *salafī*-movement, which has various forms, but includes—in the words of Joas Wagemakers—opposition to ‘the supposedly compromised and sullied message of what might be termed orthodox Sunni Ash‘arī/Māturidī theology’. For details of the movement and further readings, see ‘Salafism’ by Joas Wagemakers, at <<http://religion.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.001.0001/acrefore-9780199340378-e-255>> (accessed 30 November 2016). For a discussion of the growing religious trends (amongst both Muslims and Christians) that have ‘an aversion to traditional religious ideology (*kalam*)’, see Sven-Eric Liedman, ‘Intellectual Challenges from Religion’, in *Religion in the 21st Century: Challenges and Transformations*, ed. Lisbet Christofferson et al. (Farnham, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2010), 51–66 (52).

94 For an affirmation that ‘Some scholars have doubted the affirmation of this work [*al-Fiqh al-akbar*] to Abū Ḥanīfah, but most Ḥanafī scholars affirm it as his’, see Mohammad Akram Nadwi, *Abū Ḥanīfah: His Life, Legal Method & Legacy* (Markfield and Oxford: Kube and Interface, 2010), 87. For arguments justifying its attribution to Abū Ḥanīfah, see: Ḥaddād, *Four Imams*, 67–8; *al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, 24–31. For a denial of its attribution to Abū Ḥanīfah, because ‘The style in which the book is written had not yet come into existence at the time it is said to have been written’, see Shibli Nu’mānī, *Imam Abu Hanifa: Life and Work*, trans. M. Hadi Hussain (New Delhi: Idara Ish’at-e-Diniyat, 2003), 79, 82–84.

95 This was explained earlier with reference to Nawawī and Modarressi.

96 See Bayhaqī, *I’tiqād*, 307; *English Translation of Sunan Abu Dawud*, trans. Nasiruddin al-Khattab (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2008), 5:155 (although the translation above has been amended slightly by me).

97 ‘Saeed Fodeh’ is the preferred English spelling used by the author on his Facebook account (<<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100001736838161&fref=ts>> (accessed 11 September 2016)). A strict transcription of his name would be ‘Sa‘īd Fawdah’. His name was spelled as ‘Sa‘id Foudah’ for the English-translation entitled *A Refined Explanation of the Sanusi Creed*. This latter work offers a fairly detailed account of Fodeh’s learning and authorship; see *ibid.* VII-VIII.

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Imam Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Mūsā al-Bayhaqī, the hadith master, said:

All praise is due to Allah, who fashioned the creation as He willed and for what He willed, and chose whomever He willed from among His creation for His message, and for asking to know Him and to adhere to His obedience. He guided whomever He willed to respond to His call and avoid disobeying Him through the evidences that He established and the signs that He manifested; and that He promised to reward those obedient to Him, which He has prepared for them in Paradise, as He willed; and threatened punishment to those disobedient to Him, which He has prepared for them in the Fire, as He willed. There is no one who may amend His judgment, as He said unequivocally ﷻ in His Book that He revealed to His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ,

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

‘Your Lord creates and chooses whatever He wills’ (Qur’ān 28:68).

Furthermore, He said,

اللَّهُ يُصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ

‘Allah selects messengers from among the angels and people’ (Qur’ān 22:75).

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِن بَعْدِهِ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ ۚ وَعِيسَىٰ ۚ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۚ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا، وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَّمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا، رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

‘Indeed we have given revelation to you just as we gave revelation to Nūḥ and the prophets after him,’ until His saying, ‘messengers who brought good news and warned so that there would be no case for people against Allah after the sending of the messengers. Allah has always been mighty and wise’ (Qur’ān 4:163–165).

وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

‘Allah invites to the Abode of Peace, and guides whomever He wills to a straight path’ (Qur’ān 10:25).

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى

‘Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to Allah, so that He may reward those who do bad with what they have done and reward those who do well with everlasting good’ (Qur’ān 53:31).

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ، وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ،
وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

‘Fear the Fire that has been prepared for the disbelievers, obey Allah and His Messenger so that you may be shown mercy, and race to forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise whose width is the heavens and the earth that has been prepared for the pious’ (Qur’ān 3:131–133).

وَمَا تُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ ۖ فَمَنْ آمَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ، وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

‘We do not send the messengers except as bringers of good news and warners; so whoever believes and rectifies shall have no fear, nor shall they be sad. The punishment shall touch those who denied Our signs for the sins that they committed’ (Qur’ān 6:48–49).

So, all praise is due to Allah for all of His blessings. O Allah! Bless all of the messengers, and confer upon our Prophet Muḥammad the best blessing, greeting and abundant good. O Allah! Give him the means and the advantage that You promised him; give him rank in this world and the Afterlife; and raise him to the praised station

for which the first and the last of creation will envy him. O Allah! Join us to him in luxuriant gardens along with those whom You have blessed from among the prophets, the perpetually truthful, the martyrs and the righteous. We seek all of this through His grace and mercy—indeed He is the Most Merciful of the merciful and the best of the forgivers.

To proceed: through Allah's ﷻ enablement I compiled a work on the subject of what the morally responsible needs to know concerning the foundations of knowledge and its derivatives. It is a work whose reputation has spread in some countries and which benefitted those slaves of Allah enabled to hear it or obtain it. Yet, the bulk of the knowledge needed in regards to creed is overdue for explanation. Knowledge is spread out in books, but a group of students can hardly manage to gather them or encompass all of them. So I wanted—and true will is Allah's ﷻ—to compile a book that includes a clarification of what is obligatory for the morally responsible to believe and profess, along with pointing out some of its evidences in a concise manner, and what should as a rule be kept brief.

I prayed for discretion from Allah ﷻ concerning this and all of my affairs, and began writing the book while seeking Allah's aid to complete it ﷻ. I ask Him to make me and all those who study this work from among the ones He confers His most beautiful blessings and honours upon, and His abundant goodness and generosity. He is indeed its master and powerful over it; and there is no force or strength except through Allah.

CHAPTER 1

THE FIRST OBLIGATION TO BE KNOWN AND APPROVED

Allah ﷻ said to His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ,

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

‘Know that there is no god except Allah’ (Qur’ān 47:19).

He said to him ﷺ and his community,

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ

‘Know that Allah is your Master’ (Qur’ān 8:40);

and

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أُنْزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

‘Know that it is only revealed by Allah’s knowledge, and that there is no god but Him. So will you not be Muslims?’ (Qur’ān 11:14).

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا

‘Say: We believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us’ (Qur’ān 2:136).

So, according to the verses before the latter verse, knowing Allah ﷻ is obligatory. According to the latter verse, professing belief and witnessing to it is obligatory. The Sunnah has also indicated the like of what is indicated by the Book.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:¹ ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “I was commanded to fight people until they say, ‘There is no god but Allah.’ If they say it, then they protect their blood and their property from me except for a rightful penalty; and their account is on Allah ﷻ.”’ And in another narration there is the additional phrase ‘and they believe in me and what I came with’ (Muslim).

In a lengthy hadith also on the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said, “O Abū Hurayrah,” and he gave me his sandals. “Go with these sandals of mine, and

whoever you meet from behind this wall that testifies that there is no god but Allah and his heart is certain of it, give him the glad tidings of Paradise” (Muslim).

On the authority of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ؓ: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, “Whoever dies while knowing that there is no god but Allah will enter Paradise” (Muslim).

On the authority of Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said, “Paradise is incumbent for whoever’s last words were ‘there is no god but Allah’” (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad).

The first hadith clarifies what is required for the one invited to Islam to do in order for his blood to be spared thereby. The second hadith clarifies what is required in regards to joining between the heart’s knowledge and the tongue’s proclamation (when possible) in order for his faith to be correct. The third and fourth reports outline the condition for fulfilling faith in order for him to deserve entry into Paradise by Allah’s solemn promise—through Allah is the enablement.

1 Imam Bayhaqī (ؒ) was a hadith master who narrates directly from his shaykhs. Thus he narrates his full chains for every hadith and every statement of a Companion or early scholar that he adduces in this work. For the sake of brevity and so as not to bore the lay reader, I have abbreviated the chains and sufficed with mentioning just the Companion who narrated the hadith, or quoting the Companion or scholar directly if it is his or her own statement. For the same reasons mentioned above, I have also omitted some of the repetition in the work, which is frequent. It is said that the era of direct narration ended with Bayhaqī, and the bulk of hadiths narrated by later scholars that are not found in any of the six canonical collections (Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī and Ibn Mājah) are either extremely weak or fabricated. Most of Bayhaqī’s hadiths can be found in the six canonical collections or Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal’s *Musnad*. I have mentioned the other imams who narrated the hadith when this is the case, and sufficed with the mention of Bukhārī, Muslim or both of them if they narrated a hadith, due to their superior status. Tr.

CHAPTER 2

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE COSMOS

Allah ﷻ said,¹

وَالْهُكْمُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ، إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ
وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ
دَابَّةٍ وَتَضْرِبُ الرِّيَّاحُ وَالسَّحَابُ الْمُسَخَّرَ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

‘Your God is One God. There is no god but Him—the Merciful, the Beneficent. There are indeed signs for rational people in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of night and day, the ship that sails over the sea with what benefits people, the rain that Allah sends down from the sky and by it revives dead land and spreads every sort of walking creature throughout it, and the courses of wind and the clouds subjugated between the sky and the earth’ (Qur’ān 2:163–164).

On the authority of Abū ‘d-Dahā: ‘When “your God is One God” was revealed, the polytheists were amazed and said, “Muḥammad says that your God is One God. Let him come with a sign if he is truthful.’ So Allah ﷻ revealed: “There are indeed signs for rational people in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of night and day. . .” He said in these verses that there are signs for rational people.

Allah ﷻ mentioned the creation of the heavens and whatever is in them, such as the sun, the moon and subjugated stars. He mentioned the creation of the earth and whatever is in it, such as seas, rivers, mountains and minerals. He mentioned the alternation of night and day and how one overtakes the other. He mentioned the ship that sails over the sea with what benefits people. He mentioned rain water wherein is the life of countries. The provision of the slaves, animals and every walking creature is completed through it and whatever else Allah placed in the day and the night, such as the alteration of hot and cold. He mentioned whatever is spread throughout the earth, such as every walking creature of various shapes and body types, and various languages and colours. He mentioned the courses of the wind and the clouds subjugated between the heaven and the earth, and whatever is in them for the benefit of animal life. He

mentioned whatever is in all of the above as being among the clear signs for rational people.

Then in another verse He commanded that the aforementioned be examined. He said to His Prophet ﷺ,

قُلْ انظُرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

‘Say: Look at what is in the heavens and the earth’ (Qur’ān 10:101),

meaning that Allah is most knowledgeable of the clear signs and plain indications. This is because if you look carefully with your sight at the form of this cosmos and truly reflect upon it, you will find that it is like a house built-up and prepared with all the tools and materials its residents need. The sky is raised like a roof; the ground is laid-out like a carpet; the stars are arranged like lamps; precious stones and metals are stored like supplies; various plants are suitable for food, clothing and other purposes; various animals are subjugated for riding and used for convenience; and humanity is like the king of the house, with authority over whatever is in it. There is a clear indication in this that the cosmos was created with planning, measurement and order; and that it has a wise maker with complete power and profound wisdom. This is what I read in Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī’s book ﷺ.

Then in another verse Allah ﷻ encouraged people to examine the celestial and terrestrial realms and other aspects of His creation. He said,

أَوَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَأَنْ عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ أَجْلُهُمْ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ

‘Do they not look at the celestial and terrestrial realms, and whatever else Allah created? Do they not consider that perhaps their appointed time has approached? What story will they believe if not this?’ (Qur’ān 7:185).

By ‘realms’ he meant ‘signs’. He asked do they not look at the creation with contemplation and deep thought until they infer it to be a location for occurrences and changes that was brought into existence? Nothing brought into existence is independent of a maker who fashions it in a manner permissible for it and for all things brought into existence. Just as Ibrāhīm the dear friend of Allah ﷻ inferred from the like and turned away from all of creation unto a lord who is its creator and originator. Ibrāhīm said,

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

‘I turn my face with singular devotion to He who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not from among the polytheists’ (Qur’ān 6: 79).

Ibn ‘Abbās said about His statement ﷺ

وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

‘Like this, we showed Ibrāhīm the celestial and terrestrial realms’ (Qur’ān 6:75):

‘He meant by it the sun, the moon and the stars.’

When Ibrāhīm saw ‘a celestial body he said,

هَذَا رَبِّي

“This is my lord” (Qur’ān 6:76),

until it disappeared. When it disappeared he said, “I do not love things that set.” When he saw the moon emerging he said,

هَذَا رَبِّي

“This is my lord” (Qur’ān 6:76–77),

until it disappeared. When it disappeared he said,

لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ

‘If my Lord does not guide me I will surely be among the misguided people’ (Qur’ān 6:77).

‘When he saw the sun emerging he said: “This is my lord, it is the greatest,” until it disappeared. When it disappeared ‘he said,

يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ، إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

“O my people! I am innocent of what you ascribe to Allah. I turn my face with singular devotion to He who originated the heavens and the earth. . .” (Qur’ān 6:78–79).

Allah urged people to look within themselves and reflect. He said,

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ


‘And in themselves—do they not see?’ (Qur’ān 51:21),


meaning do they not infer that there is a wise, omniscient, omnipotent maker by observing the ever-present signs in the structure of the human being, such as hands with which he grabs, feet with which he walks, eyes with which he sees, ears with which he hears, a tongue with which he speaks, molar teeth that appear to him when he no longer needs nursing, his need for nutrients for which food is broken down, a stomach that is prepared for digesting nutrients, a liver through which the pure is processed, arteries and veins that run to the extremities, and bowels in which waste settles and is evacuated from the bottom of the body?

‘Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr said about the statement ‘And in themselves do they not see’: ‘He meant by it the digestive system.’

Ibn as-Sammāk said to a man, ‘Blessed is He who created you and made you see with fat, hear with bone and speak with flesh.’

We have seen things—namely, heat and cold, moisture and dryness—joined in the human body and the bodies of all other animals that are opposite to one another and whose function is mutual aversion, distinction and incompatibility. So we say that there is surely a gatherer who joined them, forced them together, and fixed them with His subtlety. If it were not for this, they would be mutually averse and incompatible. If it were permissible for polar opposites to merge and be fixed without any gatherer to gather them, it would be permissible for water and fire to merge and be fixed intrinsically without any gatherer to gather them or any sustainer to fix them. Now such a thing is impossible and inconceivable. Thus it is established that their joining is only by a gatherer that forced them to gather and merge, and he is Allah—the One, the Forceful.

It has been related that Shāfi‘ī  used similar reasoning as a proof when Marīṣī asked him, in [Hārūn] ar-Rashīd’s court, about the proofs of divine unity. He also used the verses that we mentioned in the first chapter and the differences between sounds as proofs.

We say that Allah  has clarified in His Glorious Book the transition of our beings from one state to another and how they change, so that their Creator and Mover may be inferred from that. He said,

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا، وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا

‘Why is it that you do not hope for any dignity from Allah, when He has created you in stages?’ (Qur’ān 71:13–14); and

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ، ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ، ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا
النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ
أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ، ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ

‘We have created humanity from a strain of clay, then We made him a drop in a firm settlement. Then we formed the drop into a clinging clot, thereafter We formed the clot into a piece of bitten flesh; afterwards We formed the bitten flesh into bones, and then We clothed the bones with flesh. Subsequently, We brought forth another creature. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators. Thereafter you will surely die’ (Qur’ān 23:12–15).

So when the human thinks about his being and sees that it is planned and has various transitory states—he was a drop, then a clinging thing, then a piece of bitten flesh, then flesh and bones—he knows that he did not move himself from a state of deficiency to a state of completion, because in his best condition—which is the state of intellectual maturity and full physical capacity—he is unable to bring a single body part into existence for himself. Nor is it possible for him to add a limb to his limbs. This leads him to the fact that in his state of deficiency and time of weakness he was even more incapable of doing that. He has seen himself as a youth, then middle-aged, and then old; and he did not move himself from the state of youthfulness and vigour to the state of old age and senility. He did not choose this for himself, nor is it in his ability to remove old age and return the vigour of youthfulness. He knows from this that he is not the one who did these actions to his being, and that he has a Maker that made him, and a Mover who moved him from one state to another. If it were not for that, his states would never have changed without a mover or a planner. He then knows that well-executed, precise actions cannot come about [without a maker], and commands and prohibitions are not found from one who has no life, no knowledge, no power, no volition, no hearing, no seeing and no speech. So he infers from this that his maker is alive, knowledgeable, able, willing, hearing, seeing and speaking. He then knows the creation’s attempt to dispense of one maker, how some of them rise above others, and that this would be the case if there were gods along with Him. He knows the corruption that would occur in the creation if there were gods along with Him. So he infers from this that He is One God and has no associate, as the most majestic of speakers said,

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا لَذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ، عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

‘Allah has not taken a child, nor has there ever been any god along with Him. If so, each of them would have taken away what it created and some would have risen above others. Allah transcends what they describe! He is the Knower of the Unseen and the visible, and far above what they associate with Him’ (Qur’ān 23:91–92).

Furthermore, He said,

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ

‘If there were gods other than Allah over the heavens and the earth, they would surely have been ruined. Allah—Lord of the Throne—transcends what they describe!’ (Qur’ān 21: 22).

He then knows that the Maker of the cosmos does not resemble anything from the cosmos, because if He resembled anything that was brought into existence in any respect, then He would resemble it in occurrence from that aspect. It is impossible that the eternal be brought into existence, or is eternal from one aspect and newly existent from another. Also it is impossible that the doer do his like—just as the curser has cursed but is not the curse, and the liar has lied but he is not the lie. Moreover, it is impossible for each of two similar things to do the other, because neither of the two is more fitting than the other. If this is the case, then neither one of them has any distinction over the other that results in one deserving to be that which brought the other into existence. This is the rule of two similar things in regards to whatever they resemble each other in. If this is the case, it is impossible for the Initiator ﷻ to be similar to anything. He is how He described Himself:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

‘There is absolutely nothing like Him; and He is the Hearing, the Seeing’ (Qur’ān 42:11);

and

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ، اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ، لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

‘Say: He is Allah, the Unique; Allah, the All Independent. He does not beget nor was He begotten, and no one has ever been comparable to Him’ (Qur’ān 112:1–4).

On the authority of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b:

The polytheists said, ‘O Muḥammad! Tell us the lineage of your Lord.’ So Allah ﷻ revealed: ‘Say: He is Allah, the Unique; Allah, the Absolute’ because nothing is born except that it will die, and nothing dies except that it bequeaths, and Allah ﷻ surely does not die nor does He bequeath. ‘No one has ever been comparable to Him’—He has no likeness or peer. ‘There is absolutely nothing like Him.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

Ibn ‘Abbās said concerning His statement ﷻ:

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَثَلُ الْأَعْلَىٰ

‘Allah has the highest analogy’ (Qur’ān 16:60):

‘There is absolutely nothing like Him.’ He also said about His statement:

هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا

‘Do you know anyone with His name?’ (Qur’ān 19:65):

‘Do you know any likeness or anything similar to your Lord?’

We say: some of our teachers—may Allah have mercy on them and us—have established the Maker’s existence and the occurrence of the cosmos by way of inference from the premises of prophethood and the miracles of the divine message. Their proofs are derived by way of sensory perception for whoever witnessed them, and by way of widespread reports for whoever was absent. When prophethood is established, it becomes a foundation for the obligation of accepting what the Prophet ﷺ invited to. The faith of most of those who responded to the messengers (ﷺ) was from this aspect.

On the authority of Umm Salamah, the Prophet’s wife ﷺ:

When the Prophet’s Companions ﷺ were persecuted in Makkah, he directed them to go to the land of Ethiopia. . . Ja‘far ﷺ spoke to the Negus and said, ‘We used to be upon the religion of the people of Makkah until Allah ﷻ sent a Messenger to us whose lineage, truthfulness and chastity we know well. He invited us to worship Allah alone and not to associate anything with Him, to throw aside what our people and other than them worship. He commanded us to do good deeds, and forbade us from doing bad. He commanded us to pray, fast, give charity, to maintain family ties and everything that is known to be of good character. He recited to us a revelation that

came to him from Allah ﷻ, whom nothing resembles. So we believed him and put our faith in him, and knew that what he came with was the truth from Allah ﷻ. Thus we split over this with our people and they harmed us.'

So the Negus said, 'Do you have anything with you that was revealed to him to read for me?' Ja'far replied yes, and recited, '*Kāf. Hā'. Yā'. 'Ayn. Šād'* (Qur'ān 19:1). When he recited it, the Negus cried until he wet his beard, and his bishops cried until they wet their papers. Then the Negus said, 'Indeed this speech and the speech that Mūsā ﷺ came with are taken from a single source.' (Aḥmad)

We say: these Companions, along with the Negus and his companions, inferred the Prophet's truthfulness ﷺ concerning his claim to receiving a divine message from the Qur'ān's inimitability. So they sufficed with it and believed in him and what he brought from Allah, including the establishment of the Maker's existence and the occurrence of the cosmos.

On the authority of Anas:

We were forbidden from asking the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about anything, so we used to be amazed whenever a Bedouin man would come and ask him; so we would listen. Once a man from among them came and said, 'O Muḥammad! Your messenger came to us and claimed that you claim that Allah sent you.' The Prophet replied, 'You have told the truth.' The Bedouin said, 'Who created the sky?' He replied, 'Allah.' He asked, 'Who created the earth?' He replied, 'Allah.' He asked, 'Who raised up these mountains?' He replied, 'Allah.' He asked, 'Who made all these beneficial things in them?' He replied, 'Allah.' He said, 'By He who created the sky and the earth, raised up the mountains and made these beneficial things in them—did Allah send you?' He replied yes.

The Bedouin said, 'Your messenger also claimed that five prayers are required of us throughout the day and night.' The Prophet replied, 'He told the truth.' He said, 'By He who sent you—did Allah command you with that?' He replied yes. He said, 'Your messenger claimed that we are required to pay alms with our wealth.' He replied, 'He told the truth.' He said, 'By He who sent you—did Allah command you with that?' He replied yes. He said, 'Your messenger claimed that we are required to fast a month out of the year.' He replied, 'He told the truth.' He said, 'By He who sent you—did Allah command you with that?' He replied yes. He said, 'Your messenger claimed that hajj to the House is required of us for whoever is able.' He replied, 'He told the truth.' He said, 'By He who sent you—did Allah command you with that?' He replied yes. The Bedouin said, 'By He who sent you with the truth—I will not add anything to these nor detract from them.' When he left the Prophet said, 'If he was telling the truth, he will most surely enter Paradise.' (Muslim)

This questioner had heard about the miracles of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, as news of them was widespread in his time. Maybe he had heard what he recited from the Qurʾān, so he limited his questions and answers to establishing the Creator's existence and knowing His creation. Some who had never seen his miracles demanded that he show some signs that would indicate his truthfulness. When he showed them, they believed in him and affirmed what he came with from Allah ﷻ.

On the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās:

A desert Arab came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'How can I know that you are the Messenger of Allah?' The Prophet said, 'If I called this cluster of dates from this palm tree and it testified that I am the Messenger of Allah?' He said yes. So the Prophet called the cluster of dates, and it descended until it hit the ground, and hopped until it reached the Prophet ﷺ. Then he said to it, 'Go back.' So it went back until it returned to its place. The desert Arab said, 'I testify that you are the Messenger of Allah,' and believed. (Tirmidhī)

The same meaning is also reported on the authority of Ibn ʿUmar.

1 The classical Muslim argument for Allah's existence—known as the 'argument of occurrence' (*dalīl al-ḥudūth*)—in its most basic form is as follows: every occurrence has a cause, the cosmos is an occurrence, and thus the cosmos has a cause. The major premise is known intuitively (or nearly intuitively), for an occurrence without a cause entails one of two equal possibilities preponderating over the other without a preponderating factor (which is the meaning of 'cause' here). This is rationally impossible, because it is a conflation of two mutually exclusive concepts (i.e. preponderance and equality).

The minor premise is more complex, for it is the conclusion of another syllogism: the cosmos (i.e. bodies and substances) is not devoid of occurrences, whatever is not devoid of occurrences is an occurrence, and thus the cosmos is an occurrence. The major premise is known because bodies and substances are not devoid of accidents inherent within them (whose occurrence is known through the observation of change). The minor premise is known because to negate it entails affirming an infinite regress of occurrences, which is rationally impossible. There are a number of aspects to its impossibility; one of them being that if you were to set two timelines parallel to each other, occurrence-for-occurrence in infinite regression, one starting from now and the other starting from 500 years ago, it would necessarily result in a terminable gap, rendering the infinite regress of both supposed timelines impossible. This illustration applies strictly to actual occurrences, and is not to be confused with infinite regress in a purely mathematical sense (e.g. counting down from ten to negative one *ad infinitum* as compared to counting down from three to negative one *ad infinitum*). Tr.

CHAPTER 3

ALLAH'S NAMES AND ATTRIBUTES

Allah ﷻ said,

وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا ۖ وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

‘Allah has beautiful names, so call Him with them. Abandon those who reject His names—they will be recompensed for what they used to do’ (Qur’ān 7:180);

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ ۖ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ

‘Say: Call Allah or call the Merciful. Whatever name you call, He has beautiful names’ (Qur’ān 17:110);

and

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ
الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ، هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ
الْحُسْنَىٰ

‘He is Allah, whom there is no god but Him,’ until His statement, ‘He has beautiful names’ (Qur’ān 59:23–24).

Abū Hurayrah narrated: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Allah has 99 names—100 minus one. Whoever enumerates them enters Paradise”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily Allah has 99 names—100 minus one. Whoever enumerates them enters Paradise. Indeed He is an odd number and loves odd numbers. He is Allah, whom there is no god but Him. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful, the King, the Holy, the Secure, the Believer, the Guardian, the Almighty, the Overpowering, the Proud, the Creator, the Originator, the Former, the Ever-Forgiving, the Forceful, the Giver, the Provider, the Opener, the Omnipotent, the Withholder, the

Spreader, the One Who Lowers, the One Who Raises, the Honouring, the Debaser, the Hearing, the Seeing, the Ruler, the Just, the Subtle, the Well-Informed, the Forbearing, the Magnificent, the Forgiver, the Grateful, the Sublime, the Great, the Preserver, the Nourisher, the Accountant, the Majestic, the Generous, the Watcher, the Responder, the Liberal, the Wise, the Loving, the Noble, the One Who Resurrects, the Witness, the Truth, the Disposer of Affairs, the Strong, the Invincible, the Protector, the Praiseworthy, the Counter, the Starter, the One Who Returns Things Back, the Reviver, the One Who Causes Death, the Living, the Self-Subsistent, the Rich, the Honourable, the One, the Absolute, the Able, the Powerful, the One Who Brings Forward, the One Who Keeps Back, the First, the Last, the Apparent, the Hidden, the Master, the Lofty, the Virtuous, the Acceptor of Repentance, the Vengeful, the Pardoner, the Compassionate, the King of Kings, the Possessor of Majesty and Nobility, the Fair, the Gatherer, the Independent, the Enricher, the Preventer, the Harmer, the Benefactor, the Light, the Guide, the Provider of Guidance, the Everlasting, the Inheritor, the Rightly-Guiding and the Patient.’ (Tirmidhi)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily Allah has 99 names. Whoever enumerates all of them enters Paradise. [They are:] Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the God, the Lord, the King, the Holy, the Secure, the Believer, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Overpowering, the Proud, the Creator, the Originator, the Former, the Forbearing, the Omniscient, the Hearing, the Seeing, the Living, the Self-Subsistent, the Liberal, the Subtle, the Well-Informed, the Affectionate, the Bestower, the Innovator, the Loving, the Forgiving, the Grateful, the Noble, the Starter, the One Who Returns Things Back, the Light, the Obvious, the First, the Last, the Apparent, the Hidden, the Pardoner, the Ever-Forgiving, the Giver, the Able, the Unique, the Absolute, the Disposer of Affairs, the Sufficient, the Everlasting, the Praiseworthy, the Rainmaker, the Constant, the Lofty, the Possessor of Majesty and Nobility, the Master, the Helper, the Truth, the Clear, the One Who Resurrects, the Responder, the Giver of Life, the One Who Causes Death, the Majestic, the Truthful, the Preserver, the Encompassing, the Great, the Near, the Watcher, the Opener, the Acceptor of Repentance, the Eternal, the Odd Number, the Initiator, the Provider, the Knowing, the Sublime, the Magnificent, the Independent, the Sovereign, the Omnipotent, the Most Generous, the Compassionate, the Organizer, the Powerful, the Owner, the Enforcer, the Guide, the Grateful, the Generous, the Exalted, the Witness, the One, the Possessor of Abundance, the Possessor of Sublimity, the Possessor of Bounty, the Ever-Creating, the Caretaker and the Beautiful.’

The sole narrator of the first narration mentioning the names is al-Walīd ibn Muslim on the authority of Shu‘ayb ibn Abī Ḥamzah. The sole narrator of the latter narration is ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn al-Ḥuşayn ibn at-Tarjumān on the authority of Ayyūb as-Sakhtiyānī and Hishām ibn Ḥassān. Some of the Hadith scholars claimed that the mentioning of the names in this hadith is an assertion of some of the narrators, and that the authentic hadith from the Prophet ﷺ concerns the mentioning of their number without an explanation of that number. These names are mentioned in Allah’s Book ﷻ, and in other individual hadiths from our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, whether explicitly or implicitly. We have mentioned them in the book *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*.

His ﷺ statement ‘Verily Allah has 99 names’ does not negate other than them. He only intended—and Allah knows best—that whoever enumerated 99 of Allah’s names ﷻ enters Paradise, whether he enumerated them from what we have transmitted in the first hadith, or from what we mentioned in the second hadith, or from the rest of whatever the Book and the Sunnah or scholarly consensus indicate; and through Allah is the enablement.


CHAPTER 4

THE MEANINGS OF ALLAH'S NAMES

Allah means whoever has divinity, which is the power to create things. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Beneficent is He who has mercy.

The Merciful is a superlative form indicating the one who acts mercifully. It is said that the Beneficent is willful of providing for every living thing in the world, whereas the Merciful is willful of ultimately honouring the believers in Paradise. Thus each meaning goes back to the attribute of will, which is an attribute inherent to His essence.

The King is He who possesses complete sovereignty. The Owner is He who possesses special dominion. The reality of each is in Allah's attribute  of being able to cause existence. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Holy is He who is pure of all faults, and transcendent beyond having children and equals. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Secure is He who is protected from every fault and free of every ailment. He possesses this attribute intrinsically. It is also said that it means the one from whose punishment the believers are secure.

The Believer is He who affirms Himself and His believing slaves. His affirmation of Himself is His knowledge that He is truthful. His affirmation of His slaves is His knowing that they are truthful. It is also said that the Believer is He who declares His unity. It is from His essential attributes. It is also said that the Believer is He who secures His believing slaves from His punishment on the Day of Resurrection.

The Guardian is the witness over His creation and whatever statement or deed they perform. It is from His essential attributes. It is also said that it means the Securer—meaning the watcher over a thing and its preserver.

The Almighty is the dominant who cannot be dominated, the preventer who cannot be reached. It is also said that it means the able and the strong. It is also said that it means He who has no likeness. It is from His essential attributes.

The Overpowering is He who cannot be touched, and nothing happens in His domain other than what He wills. It is among the attributes He possesses intrinsically. It is also said that He is the one who forces on the creation whatever He wills. It is also said the He is the one who assists the poor of the creation, and upon this meaning it is an attribute of His actions.

The Proud is He who is exalted over the attributes of His creation. He possesses this attribute intrinsically. It is also said that He is the one who overcomes the insolent ones of His creation. If they vie with Him in greatness, He breaks them.

The Creator is the innovator and inventor of the creation for which nothing else like it existed before.

The Originator is the Creator with specific reference to changing things.

The Fashioner is He who originates His creation in various forms.

The Ever-Forgiving is He who covers the sins of His slaves time and time again.

The Forceful is a superlative form indicating power. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of power, which is an attribute inherent to His essence. It is also said that He is the one who forces whatever He wills upon the creation.

The Giver is He who gives generously for nothing in return.

The Provider is the maintainer of every being with whatever sustains it and whatever it benefits from whether permissible or impermissible.

The Opener is the Judge between His slaves; the Opener who opens closed matters—whether religious or worldly—for His slaves. It also has the meaning of the Supporter.

The Knowledgeable is the Knower in the superlative form. Indeed knowledge is an essential attribute of His.

The Gripper and the Spreader is He who expands provision and restricts it; He extends with His generosity and mercy, and restricts with His wisdom. It has been said that the Gripper is He who clutches the souls through death (which He prescribed for His slaves), and the Spreader is He who expands souls in bodies.

The Debaser is He who debases whomever He wills by His vengeance. The Raiser is He who elevates whomever He wills by His blessings.

The Dignifying dignifies whomever He wills and the Degradar degrades whomever He wills. There is no degrader for whomever He dignifies, and no one to dignify whomever He degrades.

The Hearer is He who has hearing through which He hears all audible things. Hearing is an essential attribute for Him.

The Seeing is He who has seeing through which He sees all visible things. Seeing is an essential attribute for Him.

The Judicious is the Judge. His judgment is His communication, and His communication is His statement. The meaning goes back to the attribute of speech. It can mean His judgment that one person receives blessings and another is given trials, so it would be from the attributes of His action.

The Just is He who may do whatever He does. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Subtle is He who treats His slaves well, which is an attribute of His action. Also it could mean the Knower of obscure matters, and thus is an essential attribute.

The Well-Informed is the Knower of the ultimate nature of a thing, who is cognizant of its reality. It is said that the informed is the informer, and it is from His essential attributes.

The Forbearing is He who delays the punishment from those who deserve it, and He may excuse them.

The Magnificent is He who is worthy of the qualities of sublimity, loftiness, majesty, magnificence and transcendence from every deficiency. It is from the attributes that He possesses intrinsically.

The Forgiving is He who frequently forgives.

The Grateful is He who extols a small amount of obedience and gives an abundant reward in return for it. His gratitude could mean His praise for His slave, in which case its meaning goes back to the attribute of speech, which is an attribute that subsists in His essence.

The Sublime is the High, the Powerful. It is said that He is the one who transcends being categorized with the attributes of the creation. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Great is He who is described with majesty and grand importance. Every great thing is puny next to His majesty. It is said that it refers to one who is too great to be likened to created things. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Preserver is the guardian of everything and everyone He wills to protect. It is said that He is the one who does not forget what He knows, in which case its meaning goes back to the attribute of knowledge.

The Nourisher is the strong, in which case its meaning goes back to the attribute of ability. It is said that the timekeeper is the preserver, and it is said that He is the giver of provision, in which case it is an active attribute.

The Accountant is the Sufficient. It is said that it has the meaning of one who keeps account of things.

The Majestic is derived from majesty and magnificence. Its meaning is applied to the majesty of ability and grand importance. So, He is the majestic to whom every majestic is puny next to, and everyone of high rank is humbled before. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Generous is He who is transcendent above lowliness. He possesses this attribute intrinsically. It is said that the Generous is the one of abundant good. It is also said that He is the one who is good without an obligation upon Him, and forgiving of rights owed to Him. With this meaning it is an active attribute.

The Watcher is the Preserver to whom nothing is absent. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of knowledge.

The Responder is He who responds to the desperately needy when he supplicates Him and aids the worried when he calls Him.

The Encompassing is the Knower, so its meaning returns to the attribute of knowledge. It is said that He is the Independent whose independence envelops the needs of the creation.

The Wise is masterful in His creation of things. It could also refer to the correctness of His actions.

The Loving is He who loves His believing slaves and whom His believing slaves love. Allah's love for His slaves is His wanting mercy for them and praising them, so its meaning returns to the attributes of will and speech. It could also refer to His blessing them by making them beloved to His creation, and according to this meaning it is from the active attributes.

The Ever Glorious is the majestic, the one of lofty status, the good-doer, the one of abundant good. Linguistically, glory could mean nobility or abundance. According to the first meaning, it is an attribute that He possesses intrinsically.

The One Who Resurrects is He who resurrects His slaves after death for recompense. He could resurrect whomever He wills among them whenever they fall and raise them whenever they are struck down.

The Witness is He to whom nothing escapes His vision. It is said that He is the Knower and the Seeing, so the meaning goes back to the attributes of knowledge and seeing.

The Truth is the truly existent. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Disposer of Affairs is the Sufficient: He who deals independently with the affair that is entrusted to Him. It is said that He is the caretaker regarding provision and overseeing the creation with whatever is in their welfare.

The Strong is the Able, which means that He has complete ability and inability does not overcome Him in any state whatsoever. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of ability.

The Invincible is the extremely powerful whose power does not cease and fatigue does not effect His actions. Its meaning also goes back to the attribute of ability.

The Protector is the Helper. It is also said that it refers to the one in charge of the affair and the one who sustains it.

The Praiseworthy is the praised who deserves all praise. It is said that it is He who has the attributes of lauding and perfection. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.


The Counter is He who counts everything with His knowledge. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of knowledge.

The Starter is He who originated humanity, i.e. started them as an invention.

The One Who Returns Things Back is He who returns the creation to death after life, then returns them to life after death.

The Reviver is He who revives the dead drop and extracts from it the living soul. He revives decayed bodies by returning their souls to them at the Resurrection, revives hearts with the light of realization, and revives the earth after its death by sending down rain and growing provision.

The One Who Causes Death is He who causes the living to die and weakens the strength of the strong through death.

The Living—in reference to Allah's attribute —is He who has never ceased to be existent and described with life. His life is an attribute of His that subsists in His essence.

The Self-Subsistent is He who is constantly, unceasingly existent. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of perpetuity, which is an essential attribute. It is said that He is the planner and manager of everything that happens in the world; so according to this meaning it is an active attribute.

The Rich is the Independent who has no need. Richness is independence, and it can also mean existence. In the latter sense it means that He is one who is not tired by others seeking Him nor does anything sought escape Him. It also could also mean the Knower.

The Glorious is the ever glorious, and its meaning has been given earlier.

The One is the singular who has never ceased to be by Himself without an associate. It is said that [that it refers to] He whose essence has no peer, no likeness and no associate. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Absolute is the master whom all affairs ultimately depend on and He who is sought for in times of need. It is said that He is the Everlasting who never ceases, which is from the essential attributes.

The Able is He who has all-inclusive ability; and ability is an essential attribute of His.

The Powerful is the All-Powerful for whom nothing is impossible.

The One Who Brings Forward and the One Who Keeps Back is He who sets things in their places. He brings forward whatever He wills and keeps back whatever He wills.

The First is He who has no beginning to His existence.

The Last is He who has no end to His existence. This and the previous one are two attributes that He possesses intrinsically.

The Apparent is He who is apparent through His spectacular evidences, clear proofs, and the witness of His signs that indicate the establishment of His lordship and the

correctness of His oneness. Appearance could also mean sublimity, loftiness and possibly dominance.

The Hidden is He who cannot be imagined with modality. The meaning of the Apparent could be the Knower of the affairs that appear; and the meaning of the Hidden could be the one cognizant of whatever is Unseen. Both of them are essential attributes.

The Possessor is the Owner of all things and the one in charge of them. It could also mean the one who gives blessings repeatedly.

The Exalted is He who is transcendent of the attributes of creation. He possesses this attribute intrinsically. It could also mean the High over His creation by His force.

The Virtuous is He who treats His creation well, included them all for His provision, and singled-out whomever He willed among them for His protective friendship, receiving multiple rewards for obedience and having disobedience pardoned.

The Acceptor of Repentance is He who turns to whomever He wills among His slaves and accepts their repentance.

The Vengeful is He who takes vengeance from His enemies and recompenses them with torment for their acts of disobedience. It could also mean one who destroys them.

The Pardoner is He who pardons exceedingly. It could also mean the eraser, and this meaning goes back to pardoning sins. It could also mean grace; hence He gives abundantly from His grace.

The Compassionate is the Merciful. Compassion is profound mercy. Allah's mercy is His wanting to bless whomever He wills among His slaves. Thus the meaning goes back to the attribute of will. Furthermore, this blessing could be called mercy.

The King of Kings means that all sovereignty is in His hand and He gives it to whomever He wills. It could also mean the owner of kings or the inheritor of kings on the day that no one will claim sovereignty or dispute over it. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Possessor of Majesty and Nobility is the one deserving to have His majesty and honour proclaimed, and thus is not to be denied. He possesses this attribute intrinsically. The meaning of honour could be His honouring of the people of His protective friendship in the world by giving them knowledge of Him, and in the Afterlife by giving them Paradise. According to this [latter meaning] it would be an active attribute.

The Fair is the one just in His judgment.

The Gatherer is He who will gather all created beings on the day in which there is no doubt. It is an attribute of action. It is also said that He is the one who comprises all laudable qualities. In this sense it is an attribute He possesses intrinsically.

The Independent is He who has no need for creation. It is also said that He is the one capable of executing His will in any fashion. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Enricher is He who supports those in need from the creation. It could also mean the one of sufficient wealth, which is the meaning of sufficiency.

The Preventer is the helper who prevents, viz. guards and aids, harm from His protected friends. It is also said that He is the one who prevents giving to some people, and prevents tribulation from others.

The Harmer is He who brings harm to whomever He wants.

The Benefactor is He who brings benefit to whomever He wills.

The Light is the Guide. It is also said that [it means] He who illuminates, which is an attribute of action. It is also said that He is the Truth, and He is the one who, through evidence, is not hidden to His protected friends and it is possible to see Him with eyesight. The Originator ﷻ possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Guide is He by whose guidance the people of His protective friendship find [the correct] direction, and by His guidance animals find direction to what is in their welfare and take precaution from what harms them.

The Innovator is He who originated the creation as an entirely new thing without any previous example. This is from the active attributes. It could also mean that He has no likeness, and in this sense it is an attribute that He possesses intrinsically.

The Everlasting is He whose existence is forever. Perpetuity is an attribute that subsists in His essence. The Inheritor has the same meaning.

The Rightly-Guiding is He who gives direction, which is the Guide. It could also mean the Wise, and the Possessor of Guidance due to the rightness of His planning and the exactness of His actions.

The Patient is He who does not rush to punish the disobedient. This is close to the meaning of the Forbearing. The attribute of forbearance is more expressive of being secure from His punishment.

As for those names that are related in the narration of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn al-Ḥuşayn that are not in the narration of al-Walīd ibn Muslim, then among them are:

The Lord, which means the Master. It is also said that it means the Owner, or He who takes everything He innovated to the extent of its perfection that He determined for it. According to this meaning, it is from the attributes of His action; and according to the former, it is from the attributes of His essence.

The Affectionate means the possessor of mercy.

The Liberal is He who is exceedingly giving.

The Initiator means the Starter.

The Unique is He who has no peer and no rival.

The One is He who has no associate and no equal. It has been expressed in another manner as well: the Unique is He who solely possesses an attribute and no one shares in

it with Him; and the One is He who is alone with His essence and no one can harm Him. Both are attributes that He possesses intrinsically.

The Sufficient is He who suffices His slaves by dealing with their concerns and repelling their calamities.

The Supporter is He who meets His slaves in turmoil and delivers them.

The Constant is the existent who has never ceased and will not cease. Its meaning goes back to the attribute of perpetuity.

The Master is the Helper and the Aider.

The Evident is He for whom the affair of oneness is clear. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Truthful is He who speaks the truth and fulfils His promise. It is from the attributes of His essence.

The All-Encompassing is the one whose ability envelops all objects of ability and whose knowledge envelops all objects of knowledge. Ability and knowledge are attributes that subsist in His essence.

The Near means that He is near to His creation with His knowledge, and by His response He is near to whomever calls Him.

The Eternal is the existent that has never ceased. He possesses this attribute intrinsically.

The Odd Number is the singular who has no associate and no rival. He possesses this attribute intrinsically also.

The Inventor is He who invented the creation, i.e. commenced their creation.

The Omniscient means the Knowledgeable. Knowledge is an attribute that subsists in His essence.

The Absolute Owner is the Owner in the superlative sense. It could also mean the King. The meanings of both have been mentioned previously.

The Most Honourable is He who no honourable one equals and no rival can match. It could also mean generous.

The Planner He is the Knower of the finality and ultimate outcome of affairs, the determiner of all measures who brings them to their ends, plans all affairs with His wisdom, and arranges them according to His will.

The Possessor, [namely of] the ascending steps—these are the steps that the angels rise on.

The Possessor of Abundance and the Possessor of Bounty—this means that He is abundantly generous and magnanimous. Allah says: ‘Owner of majesty and honour.’

The Beautiful is the one who beautifies and treats well.

The Lofty could mean He who raises up: raising the degrees of whomever He wills; and thus it would be from the active attributes. It could also mean He who has the loftiest status and who possesses all degrees of accolade and praise that no one other than Him possesses. With this meaning it is an essential attribute.

There have been other assertions in addition to those that we have mentioned about the meanings of these names. We have mentioned some of them in the book *al-Asmā' wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*, and others in the book *al-Jāmi'*. The aspects that we have mentioned about their meanings are all correct. Our Lord—the ever majestic whose names are holy—is described with all of them. He has beautiful names and sublime attributes. He has no peer among His creation and no associate in His dominion. There is absolutely nothing like Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

CHAPTER 5

ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES AND ACTIVE ATTRIBUTES

Allah ﷻ said:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ۖ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ، هُوَ اللَّهُ
الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ، هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى
يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

‘He is Allah whom there is no god but Him, Knower of the Unseen and the visible. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is Allah whom there is no god but Him—the King, the Holy, the Secure, the Guardian, the Mighty, the Forceful, the Proud. Allah transcends what they associate with Him. He is Allah—the Creator, the Originator, and the Former. He has beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise’ (Qur’ān 59:22–24).

He pointed out in these verses the distinction between names of the essence and names of action, according to what we will clarify.

He has names and attributes. His names are His attributes, and His attributes are His descriptions. They are of two divisions: essential and active. His essential attributes are what He has possessed eternally and without end, and they are of two divisions: rational and revelational.

The rational is whatever is established through reason and related by revelation as well. It is of two categories. The first of them is whatever the informer indicates, and whatever the describer describes Him with concerning His essence—such as the describer’s describing Him as being a thing, an entity, existent, eternal, worthy of worship, a king, beyond any deficiency, majestic, magnificent, almighty and proud. The name and the named are one concerning this category.

The second is whatever the informer indicates, and whatever the describer describes Him with concerning attributes additional to His essence which subsist in it—such as the describer’s describing Him as being living, knowledgeable, powerful, willing, hearing, seeing, speaking and everlasting. These descriptions indicate attributes additional to His essence that subsist in it—like His life, knowledge, power,

will, hearing, seeing, speech and perpetuity. The name in regards to this category is an attribute that subsists in the named. It is not said that it is the named, or that it is other than the named.¹

As for the revelational, then it is whatever is established by way of the Book and the Sunnah only, like the Face, the hands and the eyes. These are also attributes that subsist in His essence, and it is not said about them that they are the named or other than the named. It is impermissible to ascribe a modality to them. So the Face is an attribute of His, and it is not a form. The hands are two attributes of His, and they are not limbs. The eyes are an attribute of His, and they are not eyeballs. The way of establishing them as essential attributes of His is the Truthful One informing of their establishment.

As for His active attributes, then they are names derived from His actions that are related by revelation. He possesses them in a manner that does not cease, yet is other than eternal, because the actions that they are derived from were not eternal. It is like the describer's describing Him as being Creator, Provider, Reviver, Causer of Death, Bestower of Blessings and Bestower of Bounty. The name in regards to this category, if it is from Allah ﷻ, is an attribute that subsists in His essence; it is from His speech, and it is not said that it is the named or other than the named. If the name is from the creation, then it is other than the named. Among our companions is he who was of the opinion that all of His names are of His essence, which has essential attributes and active attributes. According to this, the name and the named in regards to the whole are one; and Allah is most knowledgeable. The statements of our early companions indicate this view.

Shāfi'ī said: 'If you hear a man say "The name is other than the named," then bear witness that he is upon innovation.' In addition, Shāfi'ī has said in *Kitāb al-Īmān* what indicates that he was not of the opinion that Allah's ﷻ names are other than Him. We have transmitted his statements about this in a number of places, and through Allah is the enablement.

The people who held this opinion adduced [in their support] Allah's ﷻ statement:

بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ

'With a young boy whose name is Yahyā (Qur'ān 19:7).

So, He informed that his name is Yahyā then said:

يَا يَحْيَىٰ

'O Yahyā (Qur'ān 19:12).

He addressed him with his name, so it is known that the addressed is Yaḥyā—that is his name, and his name is he. Likewise He said:

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءَ

‘You worship nothing beside Him but names’ (Qur’ān 12:40),

and He intended the named things. He also said:

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

‘Blessed is the name of your Lord, Possessor of Majesty and Honour’ (Qur’ān 55:78);

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ

‘Blessed is He who revealed the Criterion’ (Qur’ān 25:1);

and

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ

‘Blessed is He in whose hand is dominion’ (Qur’ān 67:1).

Furthermore, it has been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ, and then from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: ‘Glory to You, O Allah, with Your praise, and blessed is Your name’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad). The Prophet ﷺ also said in supplication after the prayer: ‘Blessed are You, O Possessor of Majesty and Honour!’ (Muslim); and in the supplication of the *qunūt* prayer: ‘Blessed are You, our Lord, and Exalted’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad). Abū Maṣṣūr al-Azhari said: ‘The meaning of “blessed” is exalted and magnified.’ It is also said that it is the reflective form of blessing, which is abundance and expansion.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘When one of you goes to his bed, let him dust it off with the hem of his garment three times; for indeed he does not know what took his place. He should say: “In Your name, my Lord, I lay down on my side, and with You I raise it. If You take my soul, then forgive it; and if You let it go, then preserve it with what You preserve Your righteous slaves with.”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Note that Imam Mālik's narration does not include the phrase 'for indeed he does not know what took his place'.

We report from the hadith of Abū Dharr and Ḥudhayfah that whenever the Prophet ﷺ would down to sleep he would say: 'O Allah, in Your name I live, and in Your name I die' (Bukhārī). And he said in a narration of Abū Hurayrah in the morning supplication: 'O Allah, by You I wake, by You I go to sleep, by You I live, and by You I die' (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

ʿUbādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit mentioned that once Jibrīl ﷺ came and the Prophet was indisposed, so Jibrīl said: 'I seek remedy for you from every illness that bothers you, every envious act of an envious person, and from every evil eye. May Allah's name heal you!' (Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

If His name were other than Him or He were not the named, the one who says 'I worship Allah'—and 'Allah' is His name—would be worshipping His name as either other than Him or what is not said to be Him, and that is impossible.

The Prophet's statement 'Verily Allah has 99 names' refers to the slaves' names for Allah, because He is one in Himself. The poet said: 'Unto strength, then the name of peace be upon you.' Abū 'Ubayd said: 'He meant "then peace be upon you" because the name of peace is peace.'

1 For example, Allah is knowledgeable and possesses knowledge as an essential attribute. However, it is incorrect to say that Allah *is* knowledge or that His knowledge is other than Him, because knowledge is an abstract quality that inheres in His essence. This is the same as how it is correct to say that Zaid is intelligent (viz. Zaid possesses intelligence as an inherent quality), but it is incorrect to say that Zaid *is* intelligence or that his intelligence is other than him, because intelligence is an abstract quality that inheres in him. Tr.

CHAPTER 6

OTHER ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES

Allah ﷻ said:

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

‘He is the Sublime, the Magnificent’ (Qur’ān 2:255 and 42:4);

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ

‘He is the Sublime, the Great’ (Qur’ān 34:23);

هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

‘He is the Independent, the Praiseworthy’ (Qur’ān 57:24);

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ

‘He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden’ (Qur’ān 57:3);

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ، اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

‘Say: He is Allah, the Unique; Allah, the Absolute’ (Qur’ān 112:1–2);

هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ

‘He is the Truth, the Obvious’ (Qur’ān 24:25);

إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

‘Indeed He is Praiseworthy, Majestic’ (Qur’ān 11:73);

الْكَبِيرُ الْمُتَعَالِ

‘The Great, the Sublime’ (Qur’ān 13:9);

وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

‘There is no god but Allah, the One, the Overpowering’ (Qur’ān 38:65);

نِعَمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعَمَ النَّصِيرُ

‘The best Master and the best Supporter’ (Qur’ān 8:40);

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ
الْمُتَكَبِّرُ

‘He is Allah, whom there is no god besides—the King, the Holy, Peace, the Securer, the Watcher, the Mighty, the Overwhelming, the Proud’ (Qur’ān 59:23);

إِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا

‘Indeed all glory is for Allah’ (Qur’ān 10:65);

and

أَيَّتَعُونَ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا

‘Do they seek glory with them? Indeed all glory is for Allah’ (Qur’ān 4:139).

He said informing about Iblis:

‘He said: “By your glory, I will mislead all of them”’ (Qur’ān 38:27).

He also said:

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

‘The Face of your Lord—Possessor of Majesty and Honour—will remain for ever’ (Qur’ān 55:27);

تَبَارَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

‘Blessed is the name of your Lord, Possessor of Majesty and Honour’ (Qur’ān 55:78);

and

وَلَهُ الْكِبَرِيَاءُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

‘He has grand, supreme authority in the heavens and the earth’ (Qur’ān 45:37).

On the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه concerning the Hadith of the Intercession, the Prophet ﷺ said:

Then I stand a fourth time and praise Him with these praises, then I fall prostrate to Him. It is said to me: ‘Raise your head! Speak and it will be heard, ask and it will be given, intercede and you will be granted intercession.’ So I say: ‘Permit me to speak for whoever said there is no god but Allah.’ It is said to me: ‘This is not for you’, or ‘That does not concern you. By My might, supreme authority and magnificence, I will most certainly remove whoever said there is no god but Allah from the Fire.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

And in the narration of Sulaymān ibn Ḥarb: ‘My might, majesty and magnificence.’

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها: ‘The Prophet ﷺ used to sit after the prayer for the time it took him to say: “O Allah! You are peace, and peace is from you. Blessed are You, O Possessor of Majesty and Honour!”’

On the authority of ‘Awf ibn Mālik al-Ashja‘ī:

I prayed with Allah’s Messenger one night. He stood and read Sūrat al-Baqarah, not going over any verse mentioning mercy except that he stopped and asked for it, and not going over any verse mentioning punishment except that he stopped and sought refuge from it. Then he bowed for the same amount of time that he stood, and said in his bowing: ‘Glory to the Possessor of absolute sovereignty, dominion, authority and might.’ Then he prostrated for the same amount of time that he stood, and said the same thing in his prostration. Then he stood and read [Sūrat] Āl ‘Imrān, then read one sūrah after another. (Abū Dāwūd, Nasā’ī and Aḥmad)

We narrate from the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās that the Prophet ﷺ said this [following] supplication while bowing: ‘Most worthy of praise and glory’ (Muslim).

These attributes are from the perfect descriptions of divinity, so it is obligatory to establish every glory for Him and negate every deficiency from Him.

CHAPTER 7

ATTRIBUTES ADDITIONAL TO THE ESSENCE THAT SUBSIST IN IT

Allah ﷻ said:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

‘Allah—there is no god but Him—the Living, the Self-Subsistent’ (Qur’ān 2:255 and 3:2);

وَعَنَتِ الْوُجُوهُ لِلْحَيِّ الْقَيُّومِ

‘Faces are humbled before the Living, the Self-Subsistent’ (Qur’ān 20:111);

and

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ

‘Rely on the Living who does not die’ (Qur’ān 25:58).

So He is Living and has a life by which He is distinguished from the quality of whoever is not living.

He also said:

وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

‘Allah is powerful over everything’ (Qur’ān 59:6)

and

‘Say: He is able’ (Qur’ān 6:56).

So, He is powerful and has power by which He is distinguished from the quality of whoever is not powerful.

He also said:

وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

‘Allah is knowledgeable of everything’ (Qur’ān 24:35);

وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أُنْثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ

‘No female conceives or gives birth except with His knowledge’ (Qur’ān 35:11);

and

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ

‘They do not encompass anything of His knowledge except what He wills’ (Qur’ān 2:255).

So, He is knowledgeable and has knowledge by which He is distinguished from the quality of whoever is not knowledgeable. He further said:

لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا

‘So that you may know that Allah is powerful over everything and that Allah has encompassed everything through knowledge’ (Qur’ān 65:12).

That is to say, His knowledge encompasses all objects of knowledge, just as His ability applies generally to all objects of ability.

He said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

‘Verily Allah is the Constant Provider, Possessor of Strength and Almighty’ (Qur’ān 51:58).

He also said:

أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا

‘Verily strength is entirely for Allah’ (Qur’ān 2:165)—

strength is ability. Furthermore, He said:

‘Verily Allah does whatever He wants’ (Qur’ān 15:14);

فَعَالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

‘The Doer of whatever He wants’ (Qur’ān 11:107);

and

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ

‘Your Lord creates whatever He wills and chooses’ (Qur’ān 28:68).

Volition and will are two expressions for a single meaning. So, He is willful and has a will by which He is distinguished from the quality of whoever is forgetful, helpless or forced.

He said:

وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

‘Allah has always been hearing, seeing’ (Qur’ān 4:134);

and

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِي تُجَادِلُكَ فِي زَوْجِهَا وَتَشْتَكِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَسْمَعُ
تَحَاوَرَكُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

‘Allah has heard the statement of she who disputes about her husband and complains to Allah. Allah hears your discussion. Verily Allah is hearing, seeing’ (Qur’ān 58:1).

So, He is seeing, hearing; and has hearing and sight by which through one of them He perceives all audible things and through the other every visible thing. He also said:

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا

‘Allah spoke to Mūsā with direct speech’ (Qur’ān 4:164);

يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَاتِي وَبِكَلَامِي

‘O Mūsā! I have chosen you over other people to deliver my messages and hear my speech’ (Qur’ān 7:144);

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ

‘It is not for a human being that Allah speak to him except through revelation or from behind a partition’ (Qur’ān 42:51);

and

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ

‘If any one of those who ascribe partners to Allah seeks asylum from you, then give him sanctuary so that he may hear Allah’s speech’ (Qur’ān 9:6).

So, He is speaking and has a speech by which He is distinguished from the quality of the mute and the silent.

He said:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ

‘He is the First and the Last, the Apparent and the Hidden’ (Qur’ān 57:3);

and

الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

‘The Living, the Self-Subsistent’ (Qur’ān 2:255).

It is said about the meaning of Self-Subsistent that He is constant.

He said:

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ

‘Your Lord’s Face remains’ (Qur’ān 55:27).

So, He remains and has everlastingness. The meaning of Him being described with that is that He exists necessarily without ever having ceased, and will continue to exist without ever ceasing.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say “O Living, O Self-Subsistent!” whenever he supplicated with exertion’ (Tirmidhī). We narrate an established hadith on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplications: ‘By Your might, I seek refuge from You misguiding me, there is no god but You. You are the Living, the Self-Subsistent who does not die, while jinn and human beings all die’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah said to Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh in front of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ regarding the incident of the slandering [of 'Ā'ishah]: 'By Allah, do not kill him!' Asyad ibn Ḥadīr said: 'By Allah's life, we will surely kill him' (Bukhārī and Muslim). So, each one of them swore by Allah's life and perpetuity, and the Prophet ﷺ heard [and did not rebuke them] (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Jābir:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to teach us the prayer of seeking guidance (*istikhārah*) about a thing like he used to teach us a sūrah from the Qur'ān. He would say to us: 'If one of you is concerned about an affair, he should pray two supererogatory units of prayer and then say: "O Allah! Verily I seek guidance from You by Your knowledge, seek strength by Your power, and ask You to give from Your great bounty. Verily You know and I do not know. You are able and I am not able. You are the Knower of Things Unseen. O Allah! If you know that there is good in this affair for me, my religion, my livelihood, my final destination and the end of my affair (and he names the exact thing which he wants), then determine it for me, facilitate for me and bless me in it. O Allah! If you know that there is bad in this affair for me, my religion, my livelihood, my final destination and the end of my affair, then divert it from me and determine good for me wherever it is and make me pleased with it", or he said "in my current affair and my later affair."' (Bukhārī)

There is an establishment of the attributes of knowledge and power in this authentic hadith and the Prophet's ﷺ seeking of guidance through both of them. We have already mentioned the hadith's supporting narrations (*shawāhid*) in the book *al-Asmā' wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "None of you should say 'O Allah! Forgive me if You will, have mercy on me if You will and provide for me if You will.' Rather, he should be resolute about his issue. Verily Allah does whatever He wills, there is no one to force Him'" (Bukhārī). This establishes 'will' for Him ﷻ and that He does whatever He wills. The hadith has many supporting narrations.

Abū Naḍrah said: 'The Qur'ān ultimately says one thing:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

"Verily your Lord is the doer of whatever He wants" (Qur'ān 11:107).

Sulaymān at-Taymī narrates this statement on the authority of Abū Naḍrah, on the authority of Jābir and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī or some other Companion of the Prophet ﷺ

with this meaning. This establishes [the truth] of Allah's will ﷻ, and that what He promised His slaves in regards to what is less than ascribing partners to Him goes back to His will, just as He said:

وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ

'He forgives whomever He wills for whatever is less than that' (Qur'ān 4:48).

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah ﷺ: All praise is for Allah, whose hearing envelops all sounds. 'The one who disputes' [Khawlah bint Tha'labah] came to complain to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and I was in the corner of the house not able to hear what she was saying. Allah ﷻ revealed: 'Allah has heard the statement of she who disputes about her husband.' (Qur'ān 58:1) (Nasā'i, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

This statement establishes hearing for Allah ﷻ

On the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ in the Hadith of Jibrīl: 'The questioner said: "O Muḥammad! What is perfection of faith (*iḥsān*)?" The Prophet ﷺ said: "That you worship Allah as if you see Him, for verily if you do not see Him, He most surely sees you"' (Muslim). This hadith establishes Allah's seeing (mighty and majestic his He). Seeing and vision are of a single meaning.

We narrate in the Hadith of Heat and Cold that the Prophet ﷺ said:

On a hot day, Allah casts His hearing and sight upon the people of the earth and the people of heaven. If the slave says 'There is no god but Allah, how hot it is today! O Allah! Give me sanctuary from the heat of Hell!', Allah ﷻ says to Hell: 'Verily a slave among my slaves sought sanctuary from you through Me. I bear witness that I have given him sanctuary.'

The Prophet said something of the same meaning in regards to an extremely cold day.

On the authority of Khawlah bint Ḥakīm that she heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'If one of you comes upon an undesirable place he should say "I seek refuge with Allah's complete words from the evil of what He created," for verily nothing will harm him until he goes away from that place' (Muslim). This hadith establishes the attribute of speech for Allah ﷻ, and he said the plural 'words' as a way of venerating.

We narrate from the Prophet ﷺ about the intercession: 'Rather, go to Mūsā, a slave whom Allah gave the Torah and spoke to directly' (Bukhārī and Muslim).

In the hadith of 'Adi ibn Ḥātim on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ: 'There is not one of you except that his Lord will speak to him. There will be no partition between Him and him, nor any interpreter' (Bukhārī and Muslim).

CHAPTER 8

THE FACE, THE HANDS AND THE EYES

The way of establishing these attributes is revelation. ¹ So, we establish them because of the Truthful One's report relating them, and we do not ascribe a modality to them.

Allah ﷻ said:

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

‘Your Lord’s Face—Possessor of Majesty and Nobility—remains’ (Qur’ān 55:27).

He annexed the Face to His essence, and annexed the adjective to the Face, saying ‘Possessor of Majesty and Honour’ in the nominal case. If mentioning the Face were a syndetic relative clause and not an essential attribute He would have said ‘Possessor of Majesty and Nobility’ in the genitive case. So, since He said ‘Possessor of Majesty and Nobility’ in the nominal case, we know that it is an adjective of the Face, which is an essential attribute.

Allah ﷻ said indicating dual annexation:

مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإَيْدِي

‘What prevented you from prostrating to what I created with My hands?’ (Qur’ān 38:75).

The latter precludes one from interpreting them to mean ‘blessing or power’, because a specific mention of duality in regards to Allah’s blessings and power is not a correct meaning, for Allah’s blessings are more than can be counted. Also the verse expresses the singling-out of Ādam ﷺ and his being favoured over Iblis, so interpreting the two hands to mean power or blessing removes the meaning of being favoured, due to Ādam and Iblis’ commonality in regards to power.² Nor is it permissible to interpret them to mean ‘water and clay’, because if that is what He intended He would have said ‘created from My hands,’ just as it is said: ‘I molded this vessel from silver or from brass.’ So, since He said ‘with My hands’, we know that the intended meaning is other than that.

Allah ﷻ said:

وَلَتُصْنَعَ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِي

‘So that you may be brought up under My eye’ (Qur’ān 20:39),

and

فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا

‘Verily you are before Our eyes’ (Qur’ān 52:48).

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh said:

When ‘Say: He is able to send a punishment upon you from above you’ (Qur’ān 6:65) was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, he said: ‘I seek refuge in Your Face.’ [Then in response to] ‘Or from beneath your feet’ (Qur’ān 6:65), he said: ‘I seek refuge in Your Face.’ [Then in response to] ‘Or turn you into factions and make some of you taste the violence of others’ (Qur’ān 6:65), he said: ‘These two are lighter and easier.’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Anas: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “The believers will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection and will be concerned about that. They will say: ‘If only we had sought intercession with our Lord so that He might relieve us from this place of ours.’ So they go to Ādam and say: ‘O Ādam! You are the father of all people. Allah created you with His hand, ordered the angels to prostrate to you and taught you the names of everything. Intercede to your Lord for us so that He might relieve us of this place of ours. . .’” Then he mentions the entire hadith.

On the authority of Anas: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “No prophet was sent except that he warned about the Antichrist. He is surely one-eyed, and your Lord is not one-eyed”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

[In the aforementioned] there is a negation of the deficiency of having one eye from Allah ﷻ and an establishment of the eye as an attribute for Him in this hadith. We know from His saying,

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

‘There is absolutely nothing like Him’ (Qur’ān 42:11)

and from rational proofs that [confirm that that] the eye is not an eyeball, the two hands are not limbs, the Face is not a form, and that they are essential attributes that we establish by the Book and the Sunnah without any ascription of resemblance to the creation; and enablement is through Allah.

1 By separating this chapter from the previous one, Bayhaqī ﷺ alludes to an important methodological principle of Ahl as-Sunnah, which is to distinguish between evidences

according to the state of their indications. So, evidence in regards to its indication is of two divisions: either decisive (*qat'ī ad-dalālah*) or presumptive (*ẓannī ad-dalālah*). The 'decisive' is that which has an unambiguous meaning. The 'presumptive' is that which is ambiguous. If one meaning is more probable than the other, it is *ẓāhir*; and if both meanings are equally probable, it is *mujmal*. It is especially important when dealing with presumptive evidence that the proponent of a ruling demonstrate how he derived that ruling. In Arabic this is termed *wajh ad-dalālah* ('perspective of indication') or *wajh al-istidlāl* ('perspective of inference'). If the proponent of a ruling is unable to explain precisely from what perspective the evidence indicates his ruling, then the evidence is futile and his ruling is disregarded.

The attributes mentioned in the previous chapter are established by decisive evidence. This is contrary to the Face, the hands and the eyes, for each one of their respective evidences is presumptive. So, the main consideration when establishing power, will, knowledge, hearing, seeing, speaking and life as an exclusive set is *not* merely their agreement with reason, as some erroneously claim, but rather the 'state of their evidences'. Therefore to equate affirming the decisive with affirming the presumptive is a major error that leads to innovation. Tr.

2 Actually, it is permissible to say in Arabic 'So-and-so is in the hands of so-and-so' and mean thereby that he is under his power or authority. Allah (ﷻ) said: 'O Prophet! Say to the prisoners who are in your hands. . .' (Qur'ān 8:65). Also the specification of Ādam (ﷺ) may be understood as an indication of honouring, just as Allah frequently refers specifically to believers as His 'slaves' as an honorific title, despite the fact that the term applies to both believers and disbelievers. Furthermore, if it is said that the 'hands' in this verse decisively indicate a distinct attribute independent from power, then it entails saying that Allah created Ādam with His hands and not through His power, which is clearly incorrect. Thus the evidence is presumptive. Tr.

CHAPTER 9

THE ATTRIBUTE OF ACTION

Allah ﷻ has said:

خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

‘The Creator of everything’ (Qur’ān 6:102);

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا

‘He created everything and measured it with utmost precision’ (Qur’ān 25:2);

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ

‘He is the one who begins creation then repeats it’ (Qur’ān 30:27);

فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

‘The Originator of the heavens and the earth’ (Qur’ān 6:14);

خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ

‘He created the heavens and the earth and made darkness and light’ (Qur’ān 6:1),

and so on and so forth regarding whatever is related in the Book with the same meaning as these verses.

On the authority of ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn:

I went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and a party of Yemenis came to him. They said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! We came to you to gain understanding of the religion and to ask you about how the very first part of this affair [of creation] was.’ He said: ‘Allah ﷻ has always been, and there was nothing other than Him. His Throne was over water, and then He wrote everything in the Remembrance. Then He created the heavens and the earth.’ (Bukhārī)

His statement ‘Allah has always been, and there was nothing other than Him’ indicates that there was nothing other than Him—not water, not the Throne, nor other than them, and all these are ‘others’. He meant by his statement ‘His Throne was over water’ that then He created the water and created the Throne over the water. The clarification of that is in the hadith of Abū Razīn al-‘Aqīlī from the Prophet ﷺ when he said ‘then He created the Throne over water’.

A man once came to ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās and asked him: ‘From what was the creation created?’ He said: ‘From water, light, darkness, air and dust.’ The man said: ‘From what were these created?’ So ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās recited:

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ

‘He subjugated whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth entirely for you from Him’ (Qur’ān 45:13).

So Ibn ‘Abbās informed us that water, light, darkness, air and dust are among whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.

Allah ﷻ has informed us that the source of everything is from Him, i.e. from His creation, innovation and invention. He is the Creator of everything. He created water first (or water and whatever He willed from His creation) without any basis or any previous example. Then He made it a basis for whatever He created after it. He is the Innovator and He is the Originator. There is no god other than Him and no creator besides Him.

CHAPTER 10

THE QUR'ĀN

The Qur'ān is Allah's speech ﷻ. Allah's speech is an attribute among His essential attributes. It is impermissible for anything of His essential attributes to be created, brought into existence or occurring.¹

Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

'Our only word to a thing, if we want it, is that we say to it "Be!" and it is' (Qur'ān 16:40).

If the Qur'ān was created, Allah would have said to it 'Be.' The Qur'ān is His speech, so it is inconceivable that His speech be a statement of His, because that would necessitate a second speech; and the second speech and its relation to a third speech are like the first. This leads to infinite regress, which is fallacious. If this is fallacious, then it is fallacious for the Qur'ān to be created.

It is necessary for speech to be an eternal command related to the created thing without ever ceasing, just as the command is related to prayer tomorrow (and tomorrow is non-existent) and related to every legally-responsible person who will be created until the Day of Resurrection, except its relation to them is on the condition of soundness in the future. Likewise is His statement about creation. This is like Allah's eternal knowledge ﷻ being related to all objects of knowledge at their occurrence, His eternal hearing being related to the perception of all sounds at their appearance, and His eternal sight being related to the perception of all visible things at their existence without the occurrence of a meaning within Him. He is exalted above being a location for occurrences, or anything from His essential attributes being brought into existence.

Allah ﷻ said:

الرَّحْمَنُ، عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ، خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ

'The Beneficent taught the Qur'ān, and created humanity' (Qur'ān 55:1–3).

When He joined between the Qur'ān—which is His speech and attribute—and between humanity—which is His creation and making—He specified the Qur'ān with

teaching and humanity with creating. If the Qurʾān were created like humanity He would have said ‘created the Qurʾān and humanity’. He said:

أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ

‘Indeed He possesses the creation and the command’ (Qurʾān 7:54).

He distinguished between His creation and His command by using the letter *wāw* (‘and’), which is the letter of separation (*ḥarf al-faṣl*) and is used to indicate two separate things; thus He indicated that His speech is other than His creation.

Furthermore, He said:

لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ

‘The command is for Allah from before and after’ (Qurʾān 30:4),

meaning from before He created the creation and after that. This necessitates that the command is not created. He said:

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ

‘Verily Our word has preceded to Our slaves, the messengers’ (Qurʾān 37:171).

He also said:

‘If it were not for a word from Allah that has preceded’ (Qurʾān 7:68).

Precedence in the absolute sense entails preceding everything besides it.

He said:

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

‘Allah spoke to Mūsā directly’ (Qurʾān 4:164).

It is impermissible for the speech of a speaker to subsist in other than him, then for him to speak with it without that other, just as that is impermissible in regards to knowledge, hearing and sight. He said:

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُلِمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ
بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ

‘It is not for a human being that Allah speak to him except through revelation, from behind a partition, or by sending a messenger; thus he reveals whatever He wills with His permission’ (Qur’ān 42:51).

If Allah’s speech did not exist except as a creation within a created thing, the condition of these aspects would be meaningless due to the equality of all creation in regards to hearing it from other than Allah and their finding that—according to the Jahmiyyah—creation in other than Allah. In fact, this [wrong contention] entails eradicating the status of the prophets.

If they claim that Allah’s speaking to Mūsā was created in a tree, then it also necessitates that they contend that whoever heard Allah’s speech from an angel or from a prophet who came with it from Allah is of a better status in terms of hearing the speech than Mūsā, because they heard it from a prophet, and Mūsā ﷺ did not hear it from Allah, but rather only from a tree. In addition, it is necessary for them to then say that when the Jews heard Allah’s speech from Mūsā, Allah’s Prophet, they were of a better status in terms of this meaning than Mūsā the son of ‘Imrān—may Allah bless and give peace to him and our Prophet! This is because the Jews heard it from a prophet among prophets, and Mūsā (Allah bless and give peace to him and our Prophet), [they argue], heard it as a creation in a tree. If it were a creation in a tree, Allah ﷻ would not have been speaking directly to Mūsā from behind a partition. Furthermore, if Allah’s ﷻ speaking to Mūsā ﷺ was a creation in a tree—as they claim—it necessitates that the tree was speaking with that speech. Then it necessitates that a creation among created things spoke to Mūsā and said to him: ‘Verily I am Allah. There is no god but Me, so worship Me’ (Qur’ān 20:14). This is obviously fallacious. ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl ﷺ and others adduced these details from our predecessors.

Shāfi‘ī mentioned Ibrāhīm ibn Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Aliyyah and said: ‘I differ with him about everything. Regarding his statement “there is no god but Allah”, I do not say it in the same way as him. I say that there is no god but Allah, who spoke to Mūsā from behind a partition. That man says “there is no god but Allah, who created speech and enabled Mūsā to hear it from behind a partition.”’

Moreover, we say that the attribute of speech is established because Allah informed about [what] those who ascribe partners to Him [would say]:

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ

‘This is nothing but the speech of a human’ (Qur’ān 74:25),

meaning the Qur’ān. So whoever claims that the Qur’ān is created, he has made it the speech of a human, and this is what Allah censured those who ascribe partners to Him

for. Allah ﷻ said:

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مَدَادًا لَكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفَذَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَذَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا

‘Say: If the sea were ink for my Lord’s words, the sea would be exhausted before my Lord’s words would be exhausted, even if We came with its like as support’ (Qur’ān 18:109).

If the seas were ink to write with, the seas would be exhausted and the pens broken [before Allah’s words are exhausted]. Allah’s words ﷻ do not suffer exhaustion, just as Allah’s knowledge does not suffer exhaustion. Whoever’s speech comes to an end is subject to deficiencies and silence. Since that is not applicable to our Lord ﷻ, it is correct that He has never ceased to be speaking and will not cease speaking. He has negated exhaustion from His speech just as He negated perishing from His Face.

As for Allah’s saying,

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ

‘Verily it is the saying of a noble messenger’ (Qur’ān 69:40),

its meaning is that it is a saying that a person learned from a noble messenger, or heard from a noble messenger, or a noble messenger came with it. He has also said:

فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ

‘Give him sanctuary so that he may hear Allah’s speech’ (Qur’ān 9:6).

Therefore He established that the Qur’ān is Allah’s speech ﷻ, and a single thing is not both the Messenger’s speech ﷻ and Allah’s speech; thus this indicates that the intent of the first verse mentioned above is what we said.

[Regarding] His saying,

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا

‘Verily We made it an Arabic Qur’ān’ (Qur’ān 43:3),

it means: ‘We named it “an Arabic Qur’ān” and revealed it through the angel whom we enabled to hear it so that he may descend with it in the Arabic language in order for

people to comprehend its meaning.’ It is like Allah ﷻ saying:

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ

‘They make for Allah what they dislike’ (Qur’ān 16: 62),

meaning that they describe Allah with what they dislike, not that they actually create.

His saying,

مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ مُّحَدَّثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ

‘A new remembrance does not come to them from their Lord except that they hear it and are playing’ (Qur’ān 21:2)

carries the possible meaning of a remembrance other than the Qur’ān, which is the Messenger’s speech ﷻ and his admonition of them. Likewise, His saying,

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَ يُتَنَفَّعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

‘Remind them, for indeed reminding benefits the believers’ (Qur’ān 51:55)

supports this. Also He did not say ‘a remembrance does not come to them except that it is new’; rather, He said ‘A new remembrance does not come to them from their Lord except that they hear it and are playing,’ indicating that the remembrance is not new. Furthermore, He intended the mentioning of the Qur’ān to them, its recitation to them, and their knowledge of it, all of which is newly brought into existence. The mentioned, the recited and the known is not newly brought into existence, just as the slave’s remembrance of Allah, his knowledge of Him and his worship of Him is newly brought into existence; yet the remembered, the known and the worshipped are not newly brought into existence. When this verse was adduced against Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ﷺ he said: ‘It is possible that it means the revelation of the remembrance to us is newly brought into existence, not that the remembrance itself is newly brought into existence.’ This response of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ﷺ is obvious in the verse. The coming of the remembrance is its revelation upon the tongue of the angel who came with it. Revelation is newly brought into existence, and Aḥmad ﷺ responded with the first answer.

As for ‘Īsā being named the ‘Word of Allah’, then it is understood with the meaning that he was made with Allah’s word without a father, just as Ādam was made with Allah’s word without a father or a mother. Allah clarified this by saying:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

‘Verily the similitude of ‘Īsā with Allah is like the similitude of Ādam: He created him from dust and then said to him “Be,” so he was’ (Qur’ān 3:59).

We have narrated in a sound hadith on the authority of ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘He wrote everything in the Remembrance,’ and the Qur’ān is among what He wrote in the Remembrance according to His ﷺ saying:

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ، فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ

‘Rather, it is a glorious Qur’ān in a Preserved Tablet’ (Qur’ān 85:21–22).

In this there is an indication of the Qur’ān’s eternality and its existence before the need for it occurred. The sound hadith that Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh informed us indicates this on the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Ādam and Mūsā debated before their Lord. So Mūsā to Ādam: “You are he who Allah created with His hand, breathed into from His spirit and made the angels prostrate to you, then you brought people down to earth with your error.” Ādam said: “You are Mūsā, he whom Allah chose for His messages and to hear His speech, to whom He gave the Tablets within which there is a clarification of everything, and brought you close to Him for an intimate conversation. How long was the Torah existent before I was created?” Mūsā said: “40 years.” Ādam said: “Did you find in it ‘Ādam disobeyed his Lord and deviated’ (Qur’ān 20:121)?” He said yes. Ādam said: “So do you blame me for doing a deed that in His knowledge Allah wrote for me that I would do it before He created me by 40 years?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said: ‘So Ādam overcame Mūsā.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

The date [of 40 years] is in reference to Him manifesting that to whomever He willed among His angels. In this hadith, along with the verse, is an indication of its existence before the error occurred from Ādam ﷺ.

Allah’s ﷻ speech has existed without ever ceasing and will never cease to exist. Through Him enabling whomever He wills among His angels, messengers and slaves to hear His speech whenever He wills it became audible to them without an ascription of modality. The audible is His speech, which He has never ceased and will never cease to be described with. His speech does not resemble the speech of created things, just as the rest of His qualities do not resemble the qualities of creating things; and through Allah is the enablement.

On the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh: ‘When the Prophet ﷺ was commanded to convey the message he started saying: “O people! Why do you harm me for conveying my Lord’s speech?” meaning the Qur’ān’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

On the authority of ‘Alī ؓ: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say whenever he laid down: “O Allah! I seek refuge with Your noble Face and Your complete words from the evil of what You grasp by its forehead. O Allah! You expose opposition and sin. O Allah! Your forces are not defeated, Your promise is not broken and sternness does not benefit the stern against You. Glory and praise is to You!”’

So in this [latter] hadith and others, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sought refuge with Allah’s words just as He sought refuge with His noble Face. Just as His Face which he sought refuge with is not created, likewise His words which he sought refuge with are not created. Allah’s speech is one. It has never ceased and will never cease. The Prophet ﷺ used the plural to signify greatness (*ta’zīm*), like His saying:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

‘Verily We revealed the Remembrance and verily We are its preservers’ (Qur’ān 15:9).

The Prophet called them ‘complete’ because it is impermissible for there to be any flaw or deficiency in His speech, as is the case with the speech of human beings.

On the authority of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ؓ: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The best of you are those who learn the Qur’ān and teach it”’ (Bukhārī). Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān said: ‘This is what made me sit for this gathering,’ and he used to recite the Qur’ān. The Prophet also said: ‘The superiority of the Qur’ān over the rest of all speech is like the superiority of the Lord over His creation. That is because it is from Him.’ He meant by ‘that is because it is from Him’ that it is from His attributes.

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ says: ‘Whoever is busied by reading the Qur’ān from asking Me, I will give him better than what I give those who ask.’ The superiority of the Qur’ān over the rest of all speech is like the superiority of Allah over His creation”’ (Tirmidhī). Our companions say that since Allah’s superiority over His creation is that He is eternal and uncreated, the superiority of His speech over the speech of His creation is that it has never ceased to be uncreated.

Niyār ibn Mukram said that once Abū Bakr ؓ read His ﷻ saying,

الم، غُلِبَتِ الرُّومُ

‘Alif. Lām. Mīm. Rome has been defeated’ (Qur’ān 30:1–2),

and the listeners said: ‘Is this your speech or the speech of your companion?’ He said: ‘It is not my speech, nor the speech of my companion; rather, it is Allah’s speech ﷻ.’

On the authority of ‘Āmir ibn Shahr: ‘I was with the Negus and a son of his read a verse from the Gospel, and I laughed. He said: “Do you laugh at Allah’s ﷻ speech?”’

On the authority of Farwah ibn Nawfal al-Ashja‘ī: ‘I was a neighbour of Khabāb ibn al-Arth. Once he came out from the mosque, grabbed my hand and said: “Congratulations! Draw near to Allah with whatever you can do, and surely you do not come close to Him with anything more beloved to Him than His speech.”’

‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd used to say in his sermon: ‘Verily the most truthful speech is Allah’s speech ﷻ.’

‘Umar ﷻ said: ‘The Qur’ān is Allah’s speech.’

The Emir of the Believers ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ﷻ said: ‘If our hearts were pure we would not get enough of our Lord’s speech. I hate for a day to pass me by without looking in the Qur’ān.’

We narrate in the book *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*, on the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷻ: ‘I did not make any created thing an arbitrator; I only made the Qur’ān the arbitrator.’

Ibn ‘Abbās ﷻ once prayed a funeral prayer. A man from the people said: ‘O Allah, Lord of the magnificent Qur’ān, forgive him!’ Ibn ‘Abbās said: ‘May your mother be bereaved of you! Surely the Qur’ān is from Him, surely the Qur’ān is from Him!’ meaning that it is one of His attributes.

‘Amr ibn Dīnār said: ‘For 70 years I have heard our shaykhs saying that the Qur’ān is surely Allah’s speech and it is not created.’ Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah said: ‘I have been meeting our shaykhs for 70 years’—among them is ‘Amr ibn Dīnār—‘and all of them say that the Qur’ān is surely Allah’s speech and it is not created.’ This is how the narration occurs in Bukhārī’s *Tārīkh*. The shaykhs of ‘Amr ibn Dīnār are a group of the Companions, and thereafter the major Followers, so it is a narration of consensus among them.

Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq was heard reading the Qur’ān and was asked if it is created. He said: ‘It is not the Creator, nor is it created; rather, it is Allah’s speech ﷻ.’ This narration is sound and well known on his authority. This has also been narrated by Ja‘far aṣ-Ṣādiq from his father from ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, and from Zuhri from ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn. We also narrate it from different paths from Mālik ibn Anas, and it is the opinion of all the people of knowledge whether old or contemporary.

We have mentioned the names of their imams and major figures that explicitly stated this and narrated the seeking of repentance from whoever differed with it in the book *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*. We also narrate that Imam Abū Yūsuf said when asked if Abū

Ḥanīfah said that the Qurʾān was created: ‘Refuge is in Allah! And I do not say it either!’

Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfiʿī ؓ said: ‘The Qurʾān is the uncreated speech of Allah.’ Shāfiʿī’s ؓ statement indicates that what we recite from the Qurʾān with our tongues, hear with our ears and write in our volumes is called ‘Allah’s speech’ ؓ; and that Allah ؓ spoke to His slaves with it by sending His Messenger ؓ with it. ‘Alī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī also mentioned this same meaning in his book *al-Ibānah*.

Shāfiʿī ؓ said in *Kitāb al-Jizyah*:

Whoever from those who ascribe partners to Allah comes [to us], the ruler gives him asylum so that he may hear Allah’s speech and deliver him to a place of security. This is an obligation upon the ruler due to Allah saying to His Prophet ﷺ: ‘If one of those who ascribes partners to Allah seeks asylum from you, then give him sanctuary so that he may hear Allah’s speech, and deliver him to a place of security’ (9:6).

He also said in *Kitāb al-Īmān* about he who vows to not speak to a man, then sends a messenger to him:

Whoever was of the opinion that he breaks his vow adduced that Allah ؓ said: ‘It is not for a human being that Allah speak to him except through revelation, from behind a partition, or by sending a messenger; thus He reveals whatever He wills with His permission’ (Qurʾān 42:51). Verily Allah ؓ says to the believers about the Hypocrites: ‘Say: Do not give excuses—we will not believe you. Allah has informed us about your affairs’ (Qurʾān 9:94). He informed them about their affairs through the revelation which Jibrīl ؑ descended with to the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ informs them through Allah’s revelation. Whoever was of the opinion that he does not break his vow said that the speech of human beings certainly does not resemble Allah’s speech ؓ—the speech of human beings is through facing a person directly.

Then he mentions the rest of the issue, which according to what I read to Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī ‘Amr from these two books is that Abū ‘l-ʿAbbās Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb told them that ar-Rabīʿ ibn Sulaymān informed us that Shāfiʿī ؓ informed them of the aforementioned. Concerning both opinions, Shāfiʿī ؓ called what is heard from the Qurʾān ‘Allah’s speech’. Allah spoke to His slaves with it by sending His Messenger ؓ with it, and the speech of human beings—even if it is through facing a person directly, according to the judgment regarding one of the two opinions—is called ‘speech’ and ‘direct speaking’. So Allah’s speaking ؓ to His slaves could be through a message or revelation, just as the Book has come with it; and Allah is most knowledgeable.

Abū ‘l-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī ؓ said in his book:

So if a person says ‘Tell us, do you say that Allah’s speech ﷻ is in the Preserved Tablet?’ it is said to him that we say this because Allah said: ‘Rather, it is a glorious Qur’ān in a Preserved Tablet’ (Qur’ān 85:21–22). So, the Qur’ān is in the Preserved Tablet and in the chests of those who were given knowledge. Allah ﷻ said: ‘Rather, it is clear signs in the chests of those who were given knowledge’ (Qur’ān 29:49). Also it is recited with the tongues. Allah said: ‘Do not move your tongue with it in order to rush it’ (Qur’ān 75:16). So, the Qur’ān is written in our volumes in reality, memorized in our hearts in reality, recited by our tongues in reality, and heard by us in reality, just as He said: ‘Give him sanctuary so that he may hear Allah’s speech’ (Qur’ān 9:6).

Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Bukhārī said in his *Tārīkh* on the authority of Yahyā ibn Sa‘īd al-Qaṭṭān: ‘I have not ceased to hear our companions say that the actions of the slaves are created’—Bukhārī interjected that this means their movements, voices, acquisition and writing are created—‘as for the recited and clear Qur’ān established in volumes, recorded, written and contained in the hearts, then it is Allah’s speech, not created. Allah ﷻ said:

بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ

“Rather, it is clear signs in the chests of those who were given knowledge” (Qur’ān 29:49).

This statement does not differ with the statement of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal رحمه الله. We have narrated from him in the book *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt* that he rebuked the statement of his pupil Abū Ṭālib, ‘My utterance of the Qur’ān is uncreated,’ and he disliked talking about the utterance of the Qur’ān. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: ‘Whoever says “My utterance of the Qur’ān is created”’—meaning thereby the Qur’ān itself—‘is a disbeliever.’ He only rebuked those who used this phrase as a justification for saying that the Qur’ān is created. He used to consider it good to leave talking about it because of this meaning; and Allah is most knowledgeable.²

1 The reality of speech is the meanings that subsist in the self. Allah said: ‘There is nothing wrong with you proposing marriage to women or with what you conceal within yourselves’ (Qur’ān 2:235); ‘If you show what is in yourselves or hide it, Allah will take you to account for it’ (Qur’ān 2:284); ‘They hide in themselves what they do not show you’ (Qur’ān 3:154); ‘Mention your Lord within yourself humbly and reverently without speaking aloud’ (Qur’ān 7:205); ‘You hide within yourself what Allah will manifest and fear the people, while Allah is more worthy of you fearing Him’ (Qur’ān 33:37); and ‘They say within themselves: “If only Allah would punish us for what we say”’ (Qur’ān 58:8). This is contrary to voice, a quality that even animals possess: ‘And lower your voice, indeed the most obnoxious of voices is the

voice of the donkey' (Qur'ān 31:19). Allah's speech is a self-speech that transcends letters and sounds, which are occurrences. Tr.

2 Tr: Imam Aḥmad (رحمته الله) had a well-known conflict over this issue with al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Karābīsī (رحمته الله), who along with Imam Ahmad was one of the four main transmitters of Shāfi'i's old school in Iraq. Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī (رحمته الله) mentions the incident in his entry on Karābīsī in *Tabaqāt ash-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā*:

It was said to Karābīsī: 'What do you say about the Qur'ān?' He said: 'Allah's uncreated speech.' The questioner replied: 'So, what do you say about my utterance of the Qur'ān?' He said: 'Your utterance is created.' Then the questioner went to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and explained what had happened. Aḥmad said: 'This is an innovation.'

Our opinion is that Aḥmad (رحمته الله) pointed by saying 'This is an innovation' to answering the question of utterance; for it does not concern a person, and a person delving into what does not concern him in theology is an innovation. So, silence about it was better and more appropriate. It should not be thought that Aḥmad (رحمته الله) claimed that the utterance that comes out from between the lips is eternal [. . .]

It is transmitted that when Aḥmad said 'This is an innovation', the questioner went back and informed Ḥusayn. So Ḥusayn said to him: 'Your utterance of the Qur'ān is uncreated.' The questioner went back to Aḥmad and let him know Ḥusayn's second statement. Aḥmad censured this as well and said: 'This is an innovation also.'

This indicates for you what we say—that by saying 'This is an innovation,' Aḥmad only pointed to talking about the issue in the first place. Otherwise, how could he censure both establishing a thing and negating it! So understand what we say, for it is the truth, if Allah (رحمته الله) wills.

We say what Aḥmad said—the correct position is not talking about the issue at all, so long as there is no urgent need that calls for it. What also indicates for you what we say is that the Salaf did not deny that our utterance is an occurrence, rather their silence was only on talking about that, not on believing it.

CHAPTER 11

ALLAH'S ASCENSION

Allah ﷻ said:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ

‘The Beneficent was established above the Throne’ (Qur’ān 20:5).

The Throne is the chair (*sarīr*) that is well known among rational people. Allah ﷻ said:

وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ

‘His Throne was over water’ (Qur’ān 11:7);

وَهُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

‘He is the Lord of the great Throne’ (Qur’ān 9:129);

ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ

‘Possessor of the Throne, the Glorious’ (Qur’ān 85:15);

وَتَرَى الْمَلَائِكَةَ حَافِّينَ مِنْ حَوْلِ الْعَرْشِ

‘You will see the angels surrounding the Throne’ (Qur’ān 39:75);

الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ

‘Those who carry the Throne and those around it glorify with the praise of their Lord’ (Qur’ān 40:7);

وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةٌ

‘Eight will carry their Lord’s Throne above them on that day’ (Qur’ān 69:17);

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ

‘Verily your Lord is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then ascended the Throne’ (Qur’ān 7:54);

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ

‘Allah—He who lifted the heavens without any support that you see, then ascended the Throne’ (Qur’ān 13:2);

ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ

‘Then He ascended the Throne—the Beneficent’ (Qur’ān 25:59);

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ

‘He is the Forceful, above His slaves’ (Qur’ān 6:18);

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُمْ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

‘They fear their Lord from above them and do whatever they are commanded’ (Qur’ān 16:50);

إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ

‘The pure word rises to Him’ (Qur’ān 35:10),

and whatever else is related with this meaning.

He also said:

أَأَمِنتُمْ مِّنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ

‘Are you secure from He who is in the heaven?’ (Qur’ān 67:16).

He meant who is *above* the heaven, just as He said:

وَلَأَصْلَبُنَّكُمْ فِي جُدُوعِ النَّخْلِ

‘I will certainly crucify you in palm tree trunks’ (Qur’ān 20:71),

meaning *over* palm tree trunks. He also said:

فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ

‘So travel in the earth’ (Qur’ān 9:2),

meaning *on* the earth. Everything that is high is called ‘a heaven’. The Throne is the highest of the heavens, so the meaning of the verse [67:16] is—and Allah is most knowledgeable—‘Are you secure from He who is on the Throne?’ just as He explicitly stated in the other verses.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

Verily in Paradise there are 100 levels that Allah has prepared for those who fight in His path. What is between each level is like what is between the heaven and the earth. If you ask Allah, then ask for Firdaws, for indeed it is the centre of Paradise and at its highest level. Above it is the Merciful’s Throne, and from it the rivers of Paradise spurt forth. (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “When Allah finalized the creation, He wrote in a book that is with Him above the Throne: ‘Indeed my mercy overcomes my wrath’”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

The hadiths like the aforementioned are many. In what we have written from the verses is an indication of the negation of the statement of whoever among the Jahmiyyah claims that Allah ﷻ is in every place with His essence. He intended by His ﷻ saying,

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ

‘He is with you wherever you are’ (Qur’ān 57:4)

that He is with us with His knowledge, not His essence.

The correct opinion in regards to all of the aforementioned is to restrict oneself to what is related by the texts without ascribing a modality. This is the opinion of our early companions and those who followed them from the later scholars. They say that the Book has spoken of the ascension over the Throne in more than one verse, and sound hadiths have been related about it, so accepting it insofar as the textual proof is obligatory. However, investigating [its nature] and seeking a modality for it is impermissible.

A man once came to Mālik ibn Anas saying: ‘O Abū ‘Abdullāh!

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

“The Beneficent ascended the Throne” (Qur’ān 20:5).

How did He ascend?’ So Mālik lowered his head, and the sweat began to pour. Then he said: ‘Ascension is not unknown and a modality is incomprehensible. Faith in ascension is obligatory, and asking about it is an innovation. I think that you are only an innovator.’ So he ordered that he be removed. The majority of our scholars approached the issue of ascension like this, as they did in the issues of *coming*, *arriving* and *descending*. Allah ﷻ said:

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

‘Your Lord and the angels come in rows’ (Qur’ān 89:22);

and

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِّنَ الْغَمَامِ

‘Do they wait but for Allah to arrive to them in coverings from the clouds?’ (Qur’ān 2:210).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ descends every night to the lowest heaven when just the last third of the night remains. He says: ‘Whoever supplicates Me, I will answer him; whoever asks Me, I will give him; whoever seeks My forgiveness, I will forgive him’”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). This is a sound hadith. A group of the Companions narrated it from the Prophet ﷺ, and not one of the Companions or the Followers discussed its interpretation.


Regarding what the Book and the Sunnah relate of such matters, the People of Hadith are divided into two groups. Firstly, those who accepted them, believed in them, did not interpret them, entrusted knowledge of them to Allah,¹ negated modality from them, and negated ascribing resemblance to them. Secondly, those who accepted them, believed in them, and interpreted them in a manner whose usage is correct in the language and does not contradict divine oneness.² We have mentioned these two approaches³ in the book *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt*, in regards to similar issues as those discussed in this chapter.


Overall, it is obligatory to know that Allah’s ascension ﷻ is not the ascension of straightening-up from crookedness, nor settlement in a place, nor touching anything from His creation. He is ascended over His Throne just as He informed without how and



without where, distinct from all of His creation. His arrival is not an arrival from one place to another. His coming is not a motion. His descending is not a movement. His self is not a body. His Face is not a form. His hand is not a limb. And His eye is not an organ. We only affirm these descriptions because the texts came with them, and we negate any ascription of modality to them. He has said: ‘Nothing is like Him’ (Qur’ān 42:11); ‘No one has ever been comparable to Him’ (Qur’ān 112:4); and ‘Do you know anyone with His name?’ (Qur’ān 19:65).


When Awzā’ī, Mālik, Sufyān ath-Thawrī and al-Layth ibn Sa’d were asked about these hadiths, they said: ‘Let them pass as they have come without a modality.’

Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah said: ‘[Regarding] everything that Allah described Himself with in His Book, then its explanation is its recitation and silence about it.’ He meant by this—and Allah is most knowledgeable—that any explanation that leads to ascribing a modality [is not allowed]. Ascribing a modality to His description entails ascribing a resemblance to Him with His creation in regards to qualities of occurrence.

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah :

The Messenger of Allah read this verse: ‘He it is who revealed the Book to you. From it are clear verses—they are the foundation of the Book—and others are ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts there is deviance, they follow what is ambiguous by seeking tribulation and seeking its interpretation. Only Allah knows its interpretation. Those firmly grounded in knowledge say: “We believe in it, all of it is from our Lord.” Only those of pith remember’ (Qur’ān 3:7). Then the Messenger of Allah  said: ‘If you see those who follow what is ambiguous from it, those are who Allah named, so beware of them.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi‘ī  said: “‘Why?’ and ‘How?’ is not said about the foundation.’ He also said in the narration of Rabī‘ ibn Sulaymān: ‘The foundation is the Book, the Sunnah, a statement of a Companion of the Messenger of Allah  or the people’s consensus. “Why?” and “How?” is not said about the foundation.’

1 Tr: Entrusting knowledge of a text to Allah is to entrust knowledge of its *full indication* to Him. It does not mean, as some mistakenly believe, that we do not know the *meaning* of an expression when read in context. For example, ‘Allah’s hand is over their hands’ is a figure of speech expressing Allah’s pleasure with and support of those who pledged allegiance to the Prophet . No one familiar with Arabic would deny this or say ‘I do not know what this text means.’ After understanding this, the proponent of entrustment allows for the probable indication of an attribute (as understood *prima facie* from the genitive annexation of a term to Allah) beyond the immediate figurative sense, due to the fact that Allah’s perfections are not limited to what we know of Him, and the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

Accordingly, the exact meaning of the presumed attribute is unknown, due to the impossibility of the literal sense (viz. physicality) being applied to Him.

Imam Tirmidhī, in his *Jāmi‘*, under the chapter ‘The Eternality of the People of Paradise and the People of the Fire’, comments after narrating the hadith ‘It [the Fire] says: “Are there anymore?” until they are all in it and the Beneficent puts His foot in it’:

The correct position about this according to the people of knowledge among the imams, like Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Mālik ibn Anas, Ibn al-Mubārak, Ibn ‘Uyaynah, Wakī‘ and others, is that they narrate these things and say: ‘These hadiths are narrated and believed in, and “how” is not said.’ This is the opinion of the People of Hadith—they narrate these things as they came and believe in them. They are neither explained nor conceived, and ‘how’ is not explained. This is the affair of the people of knowledge who were of that opinion and took that position.

2 Figurative interpretation is to restrict a verse or hadith to its figurative meaning or meanings. It does not mean to negate a decisively-established attribute on the basis of reason, nor to say that A=B absolutely. For example, ‘Be patient with the decree of your Lord, for verily you are in Our eyes’ (Qur’ān 52:48) is a figure of speech expressing Allah’s careful supervision and preservation of the Prophet (ﷺ). After understanding this, the proponent of figurative interpretation precludes the text from indicating a meaning by which an attribute may be justifiably established beyond the immediate figurative sense, due to the prohibition of speaking about Allah with presumption (as opposed to knowledge). Allah said: ‘Say: My Lord has only prohibited vile sins, whether apparent or hidden, and vice, oppression without right, that you associate with Allah what He did not reveal any authority for, and that you say about Allah what you do not know’ (Qur’ān 7:33); and ‘Do not follow what you have no knowledge of. Hearing, sight and the heart—verily one is held accountable for all of these’ (Qur’ān 17:36). Tr.

3 Tr: Imam Nawawī (رحمہ اللہ) said in his explanation of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: “Know that the people of knowledge have two opinions regarding the hadiths and verses of the attributes. Firstly, the approach of the majority of the Salaf, or all of them, is that their meanings are not spoken about. Rather, they say: ‘It is necessary for us to have faith in them and believe they have a meaning that befits Allah’s majesty and greatness (جلالہ), with absolute conviction that nothing is like Allah (ﷻ) and that He transcends physicality, movement, occupying space and all other attributes of created things.’ This opinion is also the approach of a group of theologians. A group of their verifying scholars preferred it, and it is the safest. Secondly, the approach of the majority of theologians is that they are interpreted according to what befits them according to their contexts. Yet their interpretation is only permissible for the one who is qualified—by being familiar with the Arabic tongue and the principles of fundamental beliefs and jurisprudence, and possessing experience in scholarship.”

CHAPTER 12

THE BEATIFIC VISION

Allah ﷻ said:

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاصِرَةٌ، إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

‘Faces on that day,’ meaning the Day of Resurrection, ‘are radiant,’ meaning shining, ‘looking at their Lord’ (Qur’ān 75:22–23).¹

There is no evidence [for the deniers of the vision] in their citing,

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ

‘Vision does not perceive Him’ (Qur’ān 6:103),

because He only intended by it that the believer’s vision does not perceive Him in the world, not the Afterlife; and the disbeliever’s vision does not perceive Him absolutely, as He said:

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمْخُجُّوْنَ

‘No! That day they are veiled from their Lord’ (Qur’ān 83:15).

Since He punishes the disbelievers by veiling them from seeing Him, He indicated that He rewards the believers by lifting the veil from their eyes so that they see Him.

Due to the fact that He said about the faces of the believers ‘Faces on that day,’ stipulating the Day of Resurrection, and described their faces as being ‘radiant,’ and then established the beatific vision for them by saying ‘Looking at their Lord,’ we know that the other verse negating it is about the world, not the Afterlife. By negating it from frowning faces and not radiant faces there is reconciliation between the two verses and an interpretation of the absolute according to the qualified.

Furthermore, some of our companions negated perception (*idrāk*) and not vision (*ru’yah*), as perception is to encompass the object of vision, as opposed to seeing. So, Allah is seen yet not fully perceived; just as He is known, yet no knowledge encompasses Him.

There is an indication in Mūsā saying,

رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ

‘My Lord, allow me to look at You’ (Qur’ān 7:143)

that Allah ﷻ will be seen with eyesight. It is impermissible for a prophet among prophets whom Allah has vested with the cloak of prophethood and protected with what He has protected the messengers to ask his Lord for something impossible. If this is impermissible for Mūsā, then we know that he did not ask his Lord for something impossible, and that seeing our Lord ﷻ is permissible.

Allah’s saying to Mūsā,

فَإِنْ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي

‘If the mountain remains in its place, you will see Me’ (Qur’ān 7:143)

also indicates the aforementioned argument. Since Allah was able to make the mountain remain and had control of the affair, if He had so acted, then Mūsā would have seen Him. So this indicates that Allah is able to show Himself to His believing slaves, and that seeing Him is possible.

His saying,

لَنْ تَرَانِي

‘You will not see me’ (Qur’ān 7:143)

refers to this world, not the Afterlife, as indicated in the aforementioned verse. Allah ﷻ said:

تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهُ سَلَامٌ

‘Their greeting the day they meet him is “Peace”’ (Qur’ān 33:44).

If ‘meeting’ is used in the absolute sense about a living, healthy person, then it is not anything but seeing with the eye; and there is no ailment in the people of this greeting. He also said:

وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيدٌ

‘And we have more’ (Qur’ān 50:35);

and

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ

‘For those who did well is goodness and more’ (Qur’ān 10:26).

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ—the one who clarifies for Allah ﷻ—and those after him among the Companions who took from him and the Followers who took from the Companions have explained that the additional reward in these verses is looking at Allah’s Face ﷻ. The belief of seeing Allah ﷻ in the Afterlife with eyesight is widely known to be [their position]. Thus we shall mention the sayings of some of them in a brief manner, for we have already written a book exclusively on establishing the beatific vision; and the enablement is through Allah.

On the authority of Ṣuhayb:

The Messenger of Allah (g) said: ‘When the people of Paradise enter Paradise they will be called: “O people of Paradise! Verily you have an appointment with Allah for a reward that you have never seen.” So they say: “What is it? Has He not brightened our faces, protected us from the Fire and entered us into Paradise?” So He removes the partition, and they look at Him. By Allah, Allah did not give them anything more beloved to them than that.’ Then he recited: ‘For those who did well is goodness and more.’ (Muslim)

We narrate from Ubayy ibn Ka‘b and Ka‘b ibn ‘Ujrah from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said about His saying ‘For those who did well is goodness and more’ that it is: ‘Looking at the Face of the Beneficent.’

Abū Bakr ؓ said about His saying ‘For those who did well is goodness and more’: ‘They will be given the additional reward of looking at their Lord.’ In the narration of Abū ‘l-Aḥwaṣ he said: ‘Looking at the Lord’s Face ؓ.’ Abū ‘l-Aḥwaṣ ؓ said: ‘Isrā’īl corroborated these two narrations on the authority of Abū Ishāq.’ We also narrated this explanation on the authority of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī.

We narrated from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Sābiṭ, Qatādah and other than them from the Followers: ‘The meaning of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī’s explanation of “more” in this verse is looking at their Lord’s Face ؓ.’

Ibn ‘Abbās said about ‘Faces on that day are radiant’ that radiance refers to ‘their beauty’ and ‘looking at their Lord’ means that ‘they look at their Creator’.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was out in full view of the people. A man came to him and said: “O Messenger of Allah! What is faith?” He said: “Faith is that you believe in Allah, His angels, His Book, the meeting with Him, and His messengers, and that you believe in the last Resurrection”’ (Bukhārī

and Muslim). The aforementioned ‘meeting’ in this hadith is meeting Allah ﷻ as he mentioned the Resurrection separately.

He also said in the hadith of the supplication of the night vigil: ‘Your promise is true, and Your meeting is true’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). In the narration of Abū Bakrah from the Prophet ﷺ: ‘You will meet your Lord and He will ask you about your deeds’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). In the hadith of Anas ibn Mālīk about the story of the Helpers, the Prophet ﷺ said to them: ‘Be patient until you meet Allah and His Messenger’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

It says in the Book:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

‘Whoever hopes for meeting His Lord, let him do righteous deeds and not ascribe any partners to His Lord in worship’ (Qur’ān 18:110).

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak said about this verse: ‘Whoever wants to look at his Creator’s Face, let him do righteous deeds and not inform anyone about them.’

On the authority of Jarīr ibn ‘Abdullāh:

We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He looked at the full moon that night and said: ‘You will be presented to your Lord ﷻ and will see Him just as you see this moon. You will have no difficulty seeing Him. So, if you are able to do a prayer before the sunrise and before sunset, then do so’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Ismā‘īl ibn Abī Khālid related the meaning of this hadith with his chain and added at his saying ‘before sunset’: ‘Then he read:

وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوبِ

“Glorify your Lord with praise before the sunrise and before sunset” (Qur’ān 50:39).

I heard Shaykh Imam Abū ‘ġ-Tayyib Sahl ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ﷺ say about what he dictated to us concerning his saying ‘You will have no difficulty seeing Him’:

He meant that you will not gather in a direction to see Him, nor will some of you be joined to others for that, for indeed He ﷻ is not seen in a direction like created things are seen in a direction. It can also be read to mean that you will not be wronged in seeing Him by some of you seeing Him while others do not, and that you will see Him in all of your directions while He is exalted above direction. The ascription of

similarity to seeing the moon is due to the certainty of the sighting, not a similarity of the object seen. Allah is far exalted above that!

On the authority of Jarīr, the Messenger of Allah said: ‘You will indeed see your Lord in plain view.’

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

People said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Will we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?’

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Do you doubt seeing the moon on a night that it is full and there are no clouds?’ They said: ‘No, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said: ‘You will indeed see him like that.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

We said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Will we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?’ He said: ‘Do you doubt seeing the sun at its zenith in a cloudless sky?’ We said: ‘No, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said: ‘Do you doubt seeing the moon on a night that it is full in a cloudless sky?’ They said: ‘No, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said: ‘You will not doubt seeing Him on the Resurrection just as you do not doubt seeing one of them.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Qays:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘There are two gardens whose utensils and everything in them is made from silver. There are two gardens whose utensils and everything else in them is made from gold. There is nothing between the people and looking at their Lord in the Garden of Eden except the cloak of haughtiness over His Face.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

His saying ‘the cloak of haughtiness’ is what He described in relation to the will to veil the eyes from seeing Him. If He wills to honour His protected friends by allowing it, He raises that veil from their eyes by creating sight in them so that they see Him without any modality, just as they know Him without any modality.

His saying ‘in the Garden(s) of Eden’ means those looking are in the gardens of Eden. These sound hadiths have supporting narrations from the hadiths of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Zayd ibn Thābit, ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd, ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar, ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim, Abū Razīn al-‘Aqīlī, Anas ibn Mālīk, Buraydah ibn Haṣīb, and others on the authority of the Prophet ﷺ.

We narrate the establishment of the beatific vision from Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه), Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān, ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Mūsā, and

others (ﷺ). It has not been related that any of them negated it. If they had disagreed about it, their disagreement would have been transmitted to us, just as when they disagreed about the permissible, the prohibited and various legal issues of the like that have been transmitted to us; for their disagreement about seeing Him with eyesight in the world was transmitted to us. Therefore we know that they were in unanimous agreement about saying that Allah is seen with eyesight in the Afterlife; and through Allah is the enablement.

Shāfiʿī (ﷺ) said about Allah's ﷻ saying,

كَأَنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُوبُونَ

‘No! Indeed they are veiled from their Lord on that day’ (Qurʾān 83:15):

‘Since He veiled them out of wrath, it is a proof that the believers will see Him out of His pleasure.’

Saʿīd ibn Asad said:

I said to Shāfiʿī (ﷺ): ‘What do you say about the hadith of the beatific vision?’ He said to me: ‘O Ibn Asad! Sentence me to either life or death! If a hadith from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is sound, then I say what it says even if it has not reached me.

1 After adducing this verse, Bayhaqī discusses some points of Arabic syntax that cannot be effectively rendered into English. Here, and in other places like it, I have omitted syntactic analyses whose true purport would be lost in translation. Tr.

CHAPTER 13

PREDETERMINATION

Allah ﷻ said:

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ

‘We have counted everything in a clear register’ (Qur’ān 36:12);

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِّن قَبْلٍ أَن نَّبْرَأَهَا

‘No calamity in the earth or in yourselves afflicts you except that it was written before We manifested it’ (Qur’ān 57:22);

فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى

‘He knows secrets and what is more hidden’ (Qur’ān 20:7);

and

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

‘Indeed We created everything with measure’ (Qur’ān 54:49).

‘Predetermination’ is a name for what occurs measuredly from the action of the able. Faith in predetermination is faith in the precedence of Allah’s knowledge ﷻ of whatever is to be from the earnings of humanity and other created things, and the origin of all of it from His measure and creation of them, the good and the bad.

Yahyā ibn Ya‘mar said:

The first person to speak about predetermination in Basra was Ma‘bad ibn al-Jahni. Ḥumayd ibn ‘Abd ar-Rahmān and I went to hajj; upon reaching Mecca, we said that if we met some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), then we would ask their opinion about predetermination. Then we bumped into Ibn ‘Umar in the mosque. My companion and I moved directly beside him, one of us on his right and the other on his left. I thought that my companion left the talking to me, so I said: ‘O Abū ‘Abd

ar-Rahmān! There has appeared before us some people who recite the Qurʾān, are familiar with knowledge and claim that there is no predetermination.’ ‘Abdullāh said: ‘If you meet them, tell them that verily I am free of them and they are free of me. I swear that if one of them had the weight of Mount Uhud in gold and spent it, Allah ﷻ would not accept it from him until he believed in predetermination (its good and its bad).’ Then he said:

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه) told me: ‘One day we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when a man with extremely white clothes and extremely black hair whom the mark of travel was not seen on came up to us, and no one knew who he was. He sat before the Prophet ﷺ, putting his knees to the Prophet’s knees and placing his hands on the Prophet’s thighs. He said: “O Muḥammad! Tell me about Islam.” So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Islam is that you testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, establish the prayer, pay zakat, fast [the month of] Ramadan and make hajj to the House if you are able to find a way.” He said: “You have told the truth,” and we were amazed at him for asking him then affirming him! He said: “Tell me about faith.” The Prophet said: “That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, the Last Day and predetermination (its good and its bad).” He said: “You have told the truth. Tell me about the perfection of faith.” He said: “That you worship Allah as if you see Him; and if you do not see Him, then know that He sees you.” He said: “Tell me about the Hour.” He said: “The questioned is no more knowledgeable than the questioner.” He said: “Then tell me about its signs.” He said: “That the slave woman gives birth to her master, and that you see barefooted, naked and poor shepherds compete in building tall structures.” Then the man left. I wondered about this a long time until the Prophet said to me: “O ‘Umar! Do you know who the questioner was?” I said: “Allah and His Messenger are most knowledgeable.” He said: “Verily he was Jibril. He came to teach you your religion.”’

Ibn Buraydah said:

Ibn Ya‘mar and I were sitting in the mosque. Ibn ‘Umar came and mentioned the hadith about the man asking the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about faith. He answered: ‘That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, the Resurrection, the Recompense, Paradise, the Fire, and predetermination (its good and its bad being from Allah (ﷻ)).’

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

Qurayshī polytheists came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, quarreling with him about predetermination, then the following verse was revealed: ‘Verily the criminals are in error and in a frenzy on the day they are pulled into the Fire on their faces. Taste the

touch of Saqar! Indeed We have created everything with measure' (Qur'ān 54:47–49). (Muslim)

Ṭāwūs said:

I met some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and they say that everything is with predetermination. I heard 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar say: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Everything is with predetermination, even disability and intelligence" or "intelligence and disability."' (Muslim).

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "Allah determined the measure of everything before He created the heavens and the earth by 50,000 years"' (Muslim).

'Ubādah ibn Ṣāmit said to his son:

O my little son! Verily you will not find the taste of real faith until you know that whatever afflicts you was never going to miss you, and that whatever misses you was never going to hit you. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'Verily the first thing Allah (ﷻ) created was the Pen. He said to it: "Write!" It said: "My Lord, what shall I write?" He said: "Write the measure of everything up until the Hour is established."' O my little son! Verily I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'Whoever dies on other than this is not from me.' (Abū Dāwūd)

On the authority of 'Alī (رضي الله عنه):

We were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for a funeral at the graveyard of Baqī'. He said: 'There is not a single one of you except that his place in the Fire or his place in Paradise has been written.' The people said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Should we not just give up?' He said: 'Work, for everyone is facilitated.' Then he recited: 'As for he who gave, was godfearing and believed in the Good, We will facilitate him to ease. As for he who was stingy, dispensed with religion and denied the Good, We will facilitate him to difficulty' (Qur'ān 92:5–10). (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه):

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ—the truthful and the believed—said: 'Indeed the creation of one of you is joined in his mother's stomach for 40 days. Then he is a clinging thing for the same amount of time, then a piece of flesh for the same amount of time. Then an angel is sent to him, and he blows the spirit into him. Then the angel is commanded with four things: write his provision, his work, his lifespan and whether he is eternally damned or eternally joyful. By He whom there is no god besides, verily

one of you does the deeds of the people of the Fire until there is nothing between him and it but a cubit, then the writing surpasses him and his life is finished with the deeds of the people of Paradise, so he enters it. Verily one of you does the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is nothing between him and it but a cubit, then the writing surpasses him and his life is finished with the deeds of the people of the Fire, so he enters it.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Ādam and Mūsā (ؑ) debated. Mūsā said: “You are our father. You failed us and got us expelled from Paradise.” So Ādam said to him: “O Mūsā! Allah chose you to hear His speech and wrote the Torah for you. Do you blame me for an affair that was determined for me before I was created?” So Ādam got the better of Mūsā.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ and Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī also narrated this from the Prophet ﷺ.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās from Ubayy ibn Ka‘b (ؓ): ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Verily the boy whom Khidr ؑ killed was marked as a disbeliever. If he had lived, he would have worn his parents out with transgression and disbelief”’ (Muslim).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ؓ: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “The eternally joyful one is he who was [written as] joyful in his mother’s stomach.”’ In another narration there is the addition: ‘and the eternally damned is he who was [written as] damned in his mother’s stomach’.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

I was riding behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said: ‘O youngster!’ or ‘O my little son! Shall I not teach you some words that Allah will benefit you with?’ I said: ‘Please do!’ So he said: ‘Be mindful of Allah and He will preserve you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him right in front of you. Get to know Him in luxury, and He will know you in hard times. If you ask, then ask Allah; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah. The pen has dried with whatever is to be. If all of creation in their entirety wanted to benefit you with anything that Allah did not decree for you, then they will not be able to do so; and if they wanted to harm you with anything that Allah did not decree on you, then they will not be able to do so. Work for Allah with gratitude and assurance. Know that patience with what you dislike is a manifold virtue, that victory is with patience, that relief is with distress and that with hardship is ease.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

Al-Layth ibn Sa'd narrates this aforementioned hadith from Qays ibn al-Hajjāj, but says: 'the pages have been lifted and the pens have dried'. This hadith is supported by reports on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه). The [part of the] hadith [that reads] 'The eternally sorrowful is he who was joyful in his mother's stomach' does not contradict the hadiths related about the measures of things and the Pen proceeding to write whatever will be, for he is only joyful in his mother's stomach through the Pen writing his joy. The Pen only writes the joy of the one who is such in Allah's knowledge and determining.

Abū Ḥāzim said: 'Verily Allah (ﷻ) knew before He wrote and wrote before He created; thus the creation proceeds according to His knowledge and writing.'

Abū Khazāmah relates on the authority of his father that he said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What is your view of a remedy we treat ourselves with, incantations we use and piety we are mindful with? Do these repel anything of Allah's predetermination?' The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Indeed that is from Allah's predetermination' (Aḥmad). What attests to the soundness of this hadith is his (ﷺ) saying: 'Everyone is facilitated to whatever he was created for.' So if a person treats himself, uses incantations or is pious, then it is with Allah's determination and facilitation that he is enabled to do that. If He did not determine it, doing it would not be easy for him; and through Allah is the enablement.

CHAPTER 14

THE CREATION OF ACTIONS

Allah ﷻ said:

ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

‘That is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of everything’ (Qur’ān 40:62).

This [verse] includes entities (*a’yān*) and actions (*af‘āl*), whether good or bad. He also said:

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

‘Or have they made partners for Allah who created like His creation, so the creation seems alike to them? Say: Allah is the Creator of everything’ (Qur’ān 13:16).

Therefore He negated that other than Him can be a creator, and negated that anything besides Him is uncreated. If actions were uncreated, Allah ﷻ would be the Creator of some things, and not all of them; and this is contrary to the verse.

It is well known that actions outnumber entities. If Allah was the Creator of entities and people the creators of actions, the creation of people would be more than His creation, and they would have superior power to Him and thus more suitable for the attribute of praise than their Lord ﷻ! Also Allah ﷻ said:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

‘Allah created you and what you do’ (Qur’ān 37:96).

Hence He has informed us that their actions are a creation of Allah ﷻ. Qatādah said about His saying,

قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ

‘He said: Do you worship what you sculpt?’ (Qur’ān 37:95)

[that it means] ‘idols’ and ‘Allah created you and what you do’ [means] ‘He created you and created what you do with your hands.’

We say: Allah ﷻ also said:

وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

‘He created everything, and He is knowledgeable of everything’ (Qur’ān 6:101).

He is praised with both statements together, for just as nothing escapes His knowledge, nothing other than Him escapes His creation. He further said:

وَأَسِرُّوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ، أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ

‘Speak in secret or speak aloud, indeed He is knowledgeable of what is in the chests. Does He who created not know?’ (Qur’ān 67:13–14).

He informed that whatever they say, secret or open, is His creation, and that He is knowledgeable of all of that.

He said:

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَى

‘He causes laughter and crying’ (Qur’ān 53:43),

just as He said:

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا

‘He causes death and life’ (Qur’ān 53:44).

Just as He is the causer of death and life by creating death and life, He is the causer of laughter and crying by creating laughter and crying. The disbeliever could laugh out of happiness for killing a Muslim—which is disbelief—and he could cry out of sadness for the dominance of the Muslims—which is disbelief.

Thus it is established that all actions, the good and the bad, originate from His creation and His bringing them into existence after having not existed. He said:

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

‘You did not kill them; rather, Allah killed them. You did not throw when you threw; rather, Allah threw’ (Qur’ān 8:17);

and

أَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ

‘Do you make it grow or are we the growers?’ (Qur’ān 56:64).

He negated from people the actions of killing, throwing and growing despite their direct involvement; and established their effect for Himself in order to indicate thereby that the effective cause of existence after non-existence is His bringing into existence and His creation.

His slaves’ direct involvement in these actions is only through a newly-occurring ability that our Creator ﷻ brought into existence after non-existence, according to whatever He willed. So, they are a creation of Allah’s ﷻ, meaning that He invented them with eternal ability, whilst they are His slaves’ acquisition, meaning the relation of newly-occurring ability with their direct involvement. That these actions or some of them happen in ways that differ with the intention of their acquirer indicates that there is one who made them happen according to what other than the acquirer willed: He is Allah, our Lord. He created us and created our actions; and He has no associate whatsoever in His creation. Blessed is Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

Imam Abū’ṭ-Ṭayyib Sahl ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān used to express the aforementioned with a nice saying: ‘The action of the Eternal Able is creation. The action of the occurring-able is acquisition. The Eternal is exalted and magnified over earning, and the occurring is beneath creating.’ Allah ﷻ has established the acquisition of the slaves, and His creation is their acquisition, according to the verses we have mentioned here—*Kitāb al-Qadar* has more details that we have not reiterated here. The Sunnah has also come with the likes of this from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

On the authority of Ḥudhayfah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Verily Allah makes every maker and what he makes.”’

On the authority of Abū Mūsā ﷺ: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “Good and bad are two creations that will be raised up for people on the Day of Resurrection.”’ In the narration of Abū Dāwūd:

By He in whose hand is my soul, good and bad are two creations that will be raised up for people on the Day of Resurrection. As for the good, it will promise its people goodness and raise hope for it. As for the bad, it will say: ‘At you!’ and they will not be able to do anything with it but capitulate. (Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Umāmah al-Bāhili, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

Indeed Allah ﷻ says: ‘I am Allah; there is no god but Me. I created goodness and determined it. So glad tidings to whomever I created for goodness, created goodness for him and brought about goodness at his hands. I am Allah; there is no god but Me. I created bad and determined it. Woe to whomever I created for bad, created bad for him and brought about bad at his hands.’

Concerning what is narrated in the hadith of the opening supplication of the prayer, ‘Good is in Your hands, and bad is not ascribed to You’ (Muslim), its only meaning is to indicate the use of etiquette when praising and extolling Allah ﷻ by ascribing to Him all pleasant affairs, and not the bad ones. It is not meant to include one thing under His power and negate its opposite, for he said in this hadith: ‘The guided one is he who You have guided’; and in another hadith: ‘The protected one is he who Allah protects’ (Bukhārī). In this is an indication that He guides some people and not others, and protects some people and not others. A person who He does not guide or protect has been forsaken by Him. Whoever He forsakes, He did not will good for him. Allah ﷻ said:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرْ قُلُوبَهُمْ

‘Those are they whose hearts Allah did not will to purify’ (Qur’ān 5:41).

An-Naḍr ibn Shumayl used to say: ‘It means that one does not come near to Allah with bad.’ He also said: ‘The explanation of “bad is not ascribed to you” is that one does not come near to Allah with bad.’

On the authority of ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn:

It was said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Does He know the people of Paradise from the people of the Fire?’ He said yes. It was said: ‘So what are the workers working for?’ He said: ‘Everyone will be facilitated for what he was created for.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

In the narration of Ibn ‘Aliyyah: ‘Work, for everyone is facilitated.’ It has reached me that Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī ﷺ said about this hadith:

He ﷺ notified them that foreknowledge about their affair is real according to the meaning of Lordly planning, and that that does not nullify their responsibility to act according to the right of slavehood. He simply informed that everyone of the creation is facilitated to what was planned for him in the Unseen. Deeds drive a person to whatever was written for him, whether eternal joy or eternal sorrow, then he is rewarded and punished as recompense. Thus the meaning of deeds is to be subjected to reward and punishment. Through deeds the proof is established, and how one is dealt with revolves around them.

Shaykh Abū 'ṭ-Ṭayyib Sahl ibn Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ؓ used to say: 'Our deeds are markers of reward and punishment.' We say: it is not for anyone to say that if He created his acquisition, facilitated him to the deeds of the people of the Fire and thereafter punished him for it, then it would be unjust of Him. Likewise, it is not said that if He enabled him to behave in that manner, knew that nothing other than such would come from him and thereafter punished him, then it would be unjust of Him. This is because 'injustice' means 'to transgress a bound'. Yet He who is our Creator and the Creator of our acquisition has no commander above Him and no opposition beneath Him. Everyone besides Him is His creation and His property. He does whatever He wills with His property and is not questioned about what He does; rather, they are questioned.

Abū 'l-Aswad ad-Daylī said:

'Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn said to me: 'Do you see what people do today? They exert themselves with it. Is it something decreed for them, and a matter predetermined that has passed; or are they exempt from what their Prophet ؓ came to them with and the proof is established against them?' I said: 'Of course, it is something decreed for them that has passed.' He said: 'Is this not injustice?' I was extremely startled by that statement and said: 'Everything is Allah's creation and possession. He is not questioned about what He does; rather, they are questioned.' He said to me: 'May Allah have mercy on you! Indeed I did not intend by asking you about this except to test your intellect. Once two men from Muzaynah came to the Messenger of Allah ؐ and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Do you see what people do today? They exert themselves with it. Is it something decreed for them, and a matter predetermined that has passed; or are they exempt from what their Prophet ؓ came to them with and the proof is established against them?" So he said: "No. Rather, it is something decreed for them that has passed." They said: "Then what are we working for?" He said: "Whoever Allah created for one of the abodes, He facilitates him to it. The affirmation of this is in Allah's Book ؓ: 'By the self and what made it, then inspired it with knowledge of its sin and its piety' (Qur'ān 91:7-8).'" (Muslim).

On the authority of Ibn ad-Daylamī:

Something occurred to my conscience about predetermination so I went to Ubayy ibn Ka'b. I said to him: 'O Abū 'l-Mundhir! Something occurred to my conscience about predetermination, and I am afraid that the destruction of my religion and my affair may be in it.' He said: 'O my nephew! If Allah ؓ were to punish all the people of His heaven and His earth, He would do so and not be unjust to them. If He had mercy, His mercy would be better for them than their deeds. If you had the weight of Mount

Uhud in gold and spent it in Allah's path, Allah would not accept it from you until you believe in predetermination and know that whatever hits you was not going to miss, and whatever missed you was never going to hit. If you die on other than this, you would enter the Fire. There is no harm in you going to my brother 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ud and asking him.' So I went to 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ud and asked him. He said the same thing to me and [added]: 'There is no harm in you going to Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān and asking him.' So I went to Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān and asked him. He said the same thing to me and [added]: 'Go to Zayd ibn Thābit and ask him.' I went to Zayd ibn Thābit and asked him. He said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say. . .' and he mentioned the same thing.' (Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

Sufyān ath-Thawrī corroborated this hadith and narrated it in his collection on the authority of Abū Sinān. Kathīr ibn Murrah also narrates it on the authority of Ibn ad-Daylamī, except that he added Sa'd ibn Waqqāṣ in the first part of the chain and did not mention Ḥudhayfah.

'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ once said to Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (رضي الله عنه): 'I wish I could find someone who I can use to dispute with my Lord.' Abū Mūsā said: 'I will do it.' So 'Amr said: 'Does He determine something for me then punish for it?' Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه said yes. 'Amr replied: 'Why?' Abū Mūsā said: 'Because He is not unjust to you.' 'Amr said: 'You have spoken the truth.'

Iyās ibn Mu'āwiyah said:

I never debated heretics with my entire intellect other than with the people of predetermination. I would say: 'Tell me, what does "injustice" mean in the speech of the Arabs?' One of them would say: 'That a man take what is not his.' I would say: 'Surely everything belongs to Allah.'

'Injustice' according to the Arabs is when a person does something that he has no right to do. However, there is nothing that Allah does except that He has the right to do it. Do you not see that He serves every type of tribulation upon children, the insane and animals as He wills? He said:

أَغْرَقُوا فَأَدْخِلُوا نَارًا

'Drown and enter the Fire' (Qur'ān 71:25),

and He drowned all of them—children and adults. He also said:

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ

‘When we sent against ‘Ād the devastating wind’ (Qur’ān 51:41).

There are other verses like this that relate the punishment of all types of tribulation upon the small, the grown, children and the insane.

CHAPTER 15

GUIDANCE AND MISGUIDANCE

Allah ﷻ said:

مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا

‘The guided is whomever Allah guides. Whomever He misguides, you will not find any protector to direct him’ (Qur’ān 18:17);

مَنْ يَشَأِ اللَّهُ يُضِلِّهِ وَمَنْ يَشَأْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

‘Allah misguides whomever He wills, and puts whomever He wills on a straight path’ (Qur’ān 6:39);

and

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

‘Verily you do not guide who you love; rather, Allah guides whomever He wills’ (Qur’ān 28:56).

There are a number of verses in His Book with the same meaning that we have cited in *Kitāb al-Qadar*.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to his uncle [Abū Ṭālib]: ‘Say “There is no god but Allah,” and I will be your witness with it on the Day of Resurrection.’ So he said: ‘If it were not that the women of the Quraysh would shame me, I would cool your eye with it.’ So Allah ﷻ revealed: ‘Verily you do not guide who you love; rather, Allah guides whomever He wills’ (Qur’ān 28:56).

Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab also narrates this from Ḥazn al-Qurashī on the authority of his father (Muslim).

On the authority of Sam‘ān al-Kilābī:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'There is no heart except that it is between two fingers from the fingers of the Beneficent. If He wills, He supports it; and if He wills, He causes it to stray.' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: 'O Allah, O turner of hearts! Establish our hearts on Your religion! The balance is in the hand of the Beneficent. He lifts some people and degrades others until the Day of Resurrection.' (Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

He meant by his statement 'between two fingers from the fingers of the Beneficent' that hearts are subject to the power of the Beneficent. Allah, our Lord ﷻ, has praised those firmly grounded in knowledge who say:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا

'Our Lord! Do not cause our hearts to stray after You have guided them' (Qur'ān 3:8).

In this and in the Sunnah is an indication that Allah ﷻ guides them and establishes them if He wills, and causes their hearts to stray and misguides them if He wills. We seek refuge in Allah from the hearts straying!

On the authority of Rifā'ah ibn Rāfi' az-Zarqī:

When those who ascribe partners to Allah were turned back on the day of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Straighten up, so that I may praise my Lord.' So rows were formed behind him. Then he said: 'O Allah! All praise is for You. O Allah! There is no prevention of what You have extended, no extender of what You have withheld, no guide for whoever You have misguided, no one to misguide whoever You have guided, no giver of what You have prevented, no preventer of what You have given, no one to bring near whoever You have pushed away, and no one to push away whoever You have brought near. O Allah! Extend Your blessings, mercy, bounty and provision for us! O Allah! Verily I ask You for comfort on the Day of Resurrection and security on the Day of Fear! O Allah! Verily I seek refuge in You from the bad of what You have given us, and the bad of what You have prevented from us! O Allah! Make faith beloved to us, and adorn it in our hearts! Make disbelief, sin and disobedience loathsome to us! Make us among the rightly guided. O Allah! Make us die as Muslims, revive us as Muslims and join us with the righteous—neither humiliated nor tried! O Allah! Fight the disbelievers who deny Your messengers and obstruct Your path; and put Your wrath and Your punishment upon them, O True God!' (Ḥākim)

Ibn 'Abbās said about His saying,

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ

‘Do they not repent to Allah and seek His forgiveness?’ (Qur’ān 5:74):

‘Allah has invited repentance to Him, but the slave is not able to repent unless Allah turns to him.’ He said about His saying,

ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوا

‘Then He turned to them, so they repented’ (Qur’ān 9:118):

‘Turning is initially from Allah ﷻ.’ About,

يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ

‘He comes between a person and his heart’ (Qur’ān 8:24),

he said: ‘He comes between the believer and disbelief, and comes between the disbeliever and faith.’

He said about His saying,

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ

‘We turn away their hearts and their sight, just as they did not believe in it the first time’ (Qur’ān 6:110):

‘If they were returned to the world, there would be a barrier between them and guidance, just as there was a barrier between them the first time in the world.’ About His saying,

رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَى أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ

‘O our Lord! Obliterate their wealth and harden their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful punishment’ (Qur’ān 10:88),

he said: ‘Allah answered Mūsā ﷺ and came between Pharaoh and faith until the drowning came upon him, and then faith did not benefit him.’ About His saying,

رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي

‘My Lord, by what You have caused me to stray with’ (Qur’ān 15:39),

he said: ‘Caused me to be misguided.’

He said about His saying

فَإِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ، مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ بِفَاتِنِينَ، إِلَّا مَنْ هُوَ صَالِ الْجَحِيمِ

‘Verily you and what you worship are not tempting except to he who is bound for Hell’
(Qur’ān 37:161–163):

‘You do not misguide nor does He misguide anyone among you except he for whom it is decreed that he is bound for Hell.’ About His saying,

كَذَلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ

‘Like this, for every nation we adorn their deeds’ (Qur’ān 6:108),

he said: ‘For every nation He adorned their deeds, which they do until they die.’ His saying ﷻ

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ

‘We have made many jinn and people for Hell’ (Qur’ān 7:179)

[was explained by him as] ‘Created [for Hell].’ About His saying,

مَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ، فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الضَّلَالَةُ

‘As He brought you into being, you will return. He guided a group, and another group deserved misguidance’ (Qur’ān 7:29–30),

he said:

Verily Allah ﷻ brought the children of Adam into being as believers and disbelievers, just as He said: ‘He it is who created you—among you is the disbeliever and the believer’ (Qur’ān 64:2).

Then He returns them on the Day of Resurrection just as He started their creation as believers and disbelievers.

He said about His saying,

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ

‘As for Thamūd, then We guided them; yet they preferred blindness over guidance’ (Qur’ān 41:17):

‘He clarified for them.’ About His saying,

قَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ

‘Your Lord decreed that you worship none but Him’ (Qur’ān 17:23),

he said: ‘[It means] He ordered.’ About His saying,

قُلْ كُلُّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ

‘Say: All is from Allah’ (Qur’ān 4:78),

he said: ‘The good and the bad are from Allah. As for the good, then Allah blessed you with it. As for the bad, then Allah tried you with it.’

He said about His saying,

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ

‘Whatever good comes to you, then it is from Allah; and whatever bad afflicts you, then it is from yourself’ (Qur’ān 4:79):

‘The “good” is Allah granting victory on the day of Badr and what came from the spoils and the victory. The “bad” is what happened at Uhud: him being cut on his cheek and his molar tooth being broken.’ All of the exegesis above is from Abū Ṭalḥah on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās.

We narrate from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab that he said concerning His saying,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

‘I did not create jinn or human beings except to worship Me’ (Qur’ān 51:56):

‘[It means:] I did not create he who worships Me except for him to worship Me.’

It is said that His saying ‘I did not create jinn or human beings except to worship Me’ means ‘except to command the legally responsible people among them with My

worship'. It is also said [that it means] 'except for you to be slaves for Me', like His saying,

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا

'There is none in the heavens and the earth except that he comes to the Beneficent as a slave' (Qur'ān 19:93).

CHAPTER 16

ON ACTIONS BEING BY ALLAH'S WILL

Allah ﷻ said:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

‘You do not will unless Allah wills’ (Qurʾān 76:30),

whereby He informed us that we do not will unless Allah has willed. He also said:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا

‘If your Lord willed, everyone on earth would believe altogether’ (Qurʾān 10:99);

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَاهَا

‘If We willed, We would give every soul its guidance’ (Qurʾān 32:13);

مَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

‘They will not believe unless Allah wills’ (Qurʾān 6:111);

فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ

‘Whomever Allah wills to guide, He opens his chest to Islam. Whomever He wants to misguide, He makes his chest tight and difficult, as if he is climbing up to the sky’ (Qurʾān 6:125);

and

وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَظْهَرْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

‘Whomever Allah wants to try, then you do not possess anything for him from Allah. Those are the ones whose hearts Allah does not will to purify’ (Qur’ān 5:41).

There are many verses of the Qur’ān with the same meaning as the aforementioned. We have cited them in the books *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt* and *Kitāb al-Qadar*.

On the authority of Ḥudhayfah: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Do not say “What Allah wills and so-and-so wills.” Rather, say “What Allah wills, then what so-and-so wills”’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad).

Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله said: ‘Will is Allah’s ﷻ volition. Allah ﷻ said: “You do not will unless Allah wills.” So Allah notified His creation that will is for Him, not His creation, and that their wills do not exist unless He wills.’

On the authority of ‘Alqamah al-Khazā‘ī:

A man asked the Prophet ﷺ: ‘Does Islam have an end?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Allah will put Islam in any household He wills good for, Arab or non-Arab.’ The man said: ‘Then what?’ He said: ‘Then trials will occur as if they are shadows.’ (Aḥmad)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk رحمه الله:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘It is not for you to be amazed by anyone until you look at how his life ended. Indeed a person will do righteous deeds for a time from his lifespan or a moment from his time, and if he were to die he would enter Paradise. Then he changes and does bad deeds. A slave will do bad deeds before his death for a time from his life, and if he were to die he would enter the Fire. Then he changes and does righteous deeds. If Allah wills good for His slave, He uses him before his death.’ The people said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! How does He use him before his death?’ He said: ‘He designates him to do a righteous deed, and then He takes him.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Paradise and the Fire debated. The Fire said: ‘I have inherited the arrogant and high-handed.’ Paradise said: ‘What is the matter with me that only the weak and disregarded people enter me?’ Allah ﷻ said to Paradise: ‘You are My mercy. I have mercy on whomever I will among My slaves through you.’ He said to the Fire: ‘You are My punishment. I punish whomever I will among My slaves through you. Each one of you has its fill.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz رحمه الله said:

If Allah willed to not be disobeyed, He would not have created Iblis. He has clarified and detailed that in a verse from Allah's Book ﷻ. Whoever knows it knows it, and whoever is ignorant of it is ignorant of it. [It is:] "Verily you and what you worship are not tempting, except to he who is bound for Hell" (37:163).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allah than the weak believer, and in each one is good. Be avid about what benefits you, seek Allah's help and do not give up. If anything happens to you, do not say "If only I did such-and-such." Rather, say "Allah determined and did what He willed," for indeed "if" opens the work of Satan.' (Muslim)

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ: 'The Prophet ﷺ said to Abū Bakr ﷺ: "O Abū Bakr! If Allah willed not to be disobeyed, He would not have created Iblis."

It is narrated that Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ about His ﷺ saying 'Whomever Allah wants to try, then you do not possess anything for him from Allah': 'Whomever Allah wants to misguide, you are not able to do anything for him against Allah.'

He said about His statement,

إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ

'If you disbelieve, then Allah is in no need of you' (Qur'ān 39:7):

[This refers to] the disbelievers whose hearts Allah did not will to purify by them saying 'There is no god but Allah'. Then He said 'He is not pleased with disbelief for His slaves' (Qur'ān 39:7), meaning His sincere slaves for whom He said 'Verily you have no authority over My slaves' (Qur'ān 15:42). He obliged His slaves to testify that there is no god but Allah and made it beloved to them.

Ibn 'Abbās said about His saying,

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا

'If We will to destroy a village We command its wrongdoers' (Qur'ān 17:16):

'[Meaning:] We give authority to the bad in the village and they disobey in it. If they do that, We destroy them with punishment.' This is the meaning of His ﷺ saying:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكَابِرَ مُجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا

‘Like this We make in every village major criminals so that they scheme within it’ (Qur’ān 6:123).

He said about His saying,

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلَىٰ أَعْيُنِهِمْ

‘If We had willed, We could have effaced their eyes’ (Qur’ān 36:66):

‘[Meaning:] We would have misguided them away from guidance, then how could they be guided? Who blinded them from guidance?’

He said about His saying,

فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ

‘Whomever wills, let him believe; and whomever wills, let him disbelieve’ (Qur’ān 18:29):

‘[Meaning:] whomever Allah wills faith shall believe and whomever He wills disbelief shall disbelieve.’ This is the meaning of His ﷻ saying:

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

‘You do not will unless Allah, Lord of the Worlds, wills’ (Qur’ān 81:29).

He said about His ﷻ saying,

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ

‘Those who ascribed partners to Allah will say, “If Allah willed we would not have ascribed partners”’ (Qur’ān 6:148):

كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ

‘Like that those before them lied’ (Qur’ān 10:39).

Then He said:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا

‘If Allah willed they would not have ascribed partners’ (Qur’ān 6:107);

and

وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

‘If He willed He would have guided you all’ (Qur’ān 16:9).

Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ said about His ﷺ saying,

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا

‘Verily we put fetters on their necks’ (Qur’ān 36:8),

مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا

‘He whose heart we make heedless to Our remembrance’ (Qur’ān 18:28)

and

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا

‘If your Lord willed everyone on the earth would believe altogether’ (Qur’ān 10:99),

and the likes of this from the Qur’ān:

Verily the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was avid that all people believe and pledge allegiance to him upon guidance. So Allah informed him that none believes unless that was preordained for him by Allah in the first remembrance, and none is misguided unless that was preordained for him by Allah in the first remembrance. Then He said to His Prophet ﷺ: ‘Perhaps you would kill yourself if they do not believe. If We willed, We would send a sign down to them from the sky and they would bow their heads in humility to it’ (Qur’ān 26:3–4).

We narrate from the hadiths of Zayd ibn Thābit, Abū ‘d-Dardā’ and others that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Whatever Allah wills to be is, and whatever He does not will to be is not’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad). The Companions took this speech from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Followers took it from them, and the Khalaf have not ceased to take it from the Salaf without any denial, so it became a consensus among them due to this.

It is mentioned in Allah’s Book:

مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

‘What Allah willed, there is no force except in Allah’ (Qur’ān 18:39).

He negated that the slave possesses any acquisition that benefits or harms him except with Allah’s will and power. Shāfi‘ī composed some poetry with the same meaning:

You will even if I do not will;

Whatever I will never is if You do not will.

You created the slaves according to what You know

And in knowledge the youth and the elderly proceed.

You gifted that one and have forsaken this one,

Gave to this one and never gave to that one.

Among them is the sorrowful and among them is the joyful,

Among them is the repugnant and among them is the beautiful.


The pre-eminent Companions and Followers adhered to the same approach as Shāfi‘ī in regards to establishing Allah’s predetermination and the occurrence of the slaves’ actions by Allah’s will. This is also the opinion of the jurists of the major cities: Awzā‘ī, Mālik ibn Anas, Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah, al-Layth ibn Sa‘d, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh, and other than them (s).


Abū ‘Uṣmah said:

I asked Abū Ḥanīfah: ‘Who are the people of the Group (*al-Jamā‘ah*)?’ He said: ‘Whoever prefers Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, loves ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān, believes in predetermination—that its good and its bad are from Allah—wipes over leather socks, does not excommunicate a believer for a sin, and never spoke about Allah with anything.’



CHAPTER 17


ON CHILDREN BEING BORN WITH A NATURAL PREDISPOSITION TO ISLAM



On the authority of Abū Hurayrah :



The Messenger of Allah  said: ‘Every child is born upon the natural predisposition. Then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian. Just as the camel bears young, do you see any that is mutilated?’ The Companions said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What about someone who dies as a child?’ He said: ‘Allah is most knowledgeable of what they would have done.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)


The latter part of this hadith indicates that the intent of the first part is to clarify his ruling in the world.

[The matter is] just as Shāfi‘ī  said about the narration of Abū ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Baghdādī at the Prophet’s  saying ‘Every child is born upon the natural predisposition’:

It is the natural disposition upon which Allah originated the creation. The Messenger of Allah  gave them no ruling insofar as themselves so long as they do not mature and expressly state by choice either faith or disbelief. The ruling is only for their parents. So whatever their parents are the day they are born, then they are of the same state—either believers, so they are upon their faith; or disbelievers, so they are upon their disbelief.

This is reinforced by what al-‘Alā’ ibn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān narrates from his father on the authority of Abū Hurayrah  from the Prophet : ‘If they are Muslims then he is a Muslim’ (Muslim).

As for their ruling in the Afterlife, then its clarification is in the latter part of the hadith: ‘Allah is most knowledgeable of what they would have done.’ So their ruling in the world in regards to marriage, inheritance and all remaining worldly rulings is the ruling of their parents unless they express themselves with one of the two. Their ruling in the Afterlife is entrusted to Allah’s knowledge  of them. The hadith of ‘Ā’ishah  indicates the like of this in regards to the children of Muslims.

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah, Mother of the Believers :

A boy from the Helpers was brought to the Prophet ﷺ for him to pray over. I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Glad tidings for this boy! He is a sparrow from the sparrows of Paradise. He never did anything wrong and never knew any wrong.’ So he said: ‘Anything else, O ‘Ā’ishah? Verily Allah created Paradise and created people for it. He created it for them and they were in the loins of their forefathers. He created the Fire and created people for it. He created the Fire for them and they were in the loins of their forefathers.’ (Muslim)

This hadith precludes stating decisively that they are in Paradise. The hadith of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b from the Prophet ﷺ about the boy who Khidr killed, ‘Indeed he was marked as a disbeliever,’ indicates the same argument, as his parents were believers.

We have narrated in the last part of *Kitāb al-Qadar* numerous reports about the children of those who ascribe partners to Allah and their parents being in the Fire, and the children of Muslims and their parents being in Paradise. I also narrated some reports that are not strong about the children of those who ascribe partners to Allah being servants of the people of Paradise. Whatever is sound among these reports indicates that their affair is entrusted to Allah ﷻ and what Allah knows about each one of them and wrote for him, whether it is joy or sorrow. It has been said about the children of Muslims that Allah ﷻ honoured this community by joining them with their descendants in Paradise.

Ibn ‘Abbās said about His saying ﷻ,

الْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ

‘We join them with their children’ (Qur’ān 52:21):

‘Allah ﷻ raises the descendant of the believer with him to his level in Paradise, even if he was less than him in practice.’ Then he recited,

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِإِيمَانٍ أَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَمَا أَلَتْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ عَمَلِهِمْ
مِّنْ شَيْءٍ

‘Those who believed and their children followed them in faith—We join them with their children and do not detract anything from their deeds’ (Qur’ān 52:21);

and said: ‘[Meaning:] We do not decrease.’ Muḥammad ibn Bishr narrated this from Thawrī from Samā‘ah from ‘Amr ibn Murrah; and likewise Shu‘bah narrated it from ‘Amr ibn Murrah.

Ibn ‘Abbās said: ‘[Allah said:]

“The human being has nothing except what he strived for” (Qur’ān 53:39);

and then Allah ﷻ revealed after this: “We join them with their children,” [meaning] by their faith. So Allah ﷻ entered the children into Paradise by the righteousness of the fathers.’

It is possible that the report of ‘Ā’ishah ؓ about the child of the Helper was before the revelation of the verse. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ruled according to the known origin—that the Pen writes the joy or sorrow of every soul—and refrained from decisively affirming his being in Paradise. Then Allah ﷻ honoured his community by joining the descendants of the believers with them, even if they did not do their deeds. Thus reports about them entering Paradise came and we know thereby the Pen’s writing of their joy.

Among them is the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ؓ: ‘Their children are the pearls of Paradise’ or ‘the pearls of the people of Paradise’ (Muslim). In addition, in another hadith of Abū Hurayrah ؓ: ‘The children of Muslims are on a mountain in Paradise, where Ibrāhīm and Sārah (q) take care of them. When the Day of Resurrection comes, they will give them to their parents’ (Aḥmad).

In the hadith of Mu‘āwiyah ibn Qurrah, on the authority of his father from the Prophet ﷺ concerning the story of a man whose son died:

The Prophet ﷺ consoled him and said: ‘O so-and-so! What is more beloved to you? To enjoy your life with him or that tomorrow you do not go to any gate among the gates of Paradise except that you find that he has preceded you to it and opened it for you?’ The man said: ‘O Prophet of Allah! It is more beloved to me that he precede me to the gates of Paradise.’ He then said: ‘Then that is for him.’ A man from the Helpers stood up and said: ‘O Prophet of Allah! May Allah make me your sacrifice! Is this especially for him or any Muslim whose child dies?’ He said: ‘This is for any Muslim whose child dies.’ (Nasā’i and Aḥmad)

We mentioned the chains of these and other hadiths in the Chapter of Patience from *Kitāb al-Jāmi‘*. They all relate to he who is delivered to his believing parents, or one of them, on the Day of Resurrection. The child of the believer is joined with him (as it has come in the Book), opens [the gates] for him (as it has come in the Sunnah), and he is given the ruling of one who had joy written for him. Shāfi‘ī ؒ has mentioned in *Kitāb al-Manāsik* what indicates the correctness of this way [of understanding] the [fate of] children of Muslims:

Verily Allah ﷻ, through His abundant blessing, has rewarded people for their deeds many times over, gifted the believers by joining their children with them and multiplied their deeds. He said: 'We join them with their children and do not detract anything from their deeds.' Since He gifted children by entering them into His Paradise without any deeds, He may give them the gift of writing virtuous deeds for them in the hajj, even if nothing of that meaning is required from them. Furthermore, hadiths concerning the children of Muslims entering Paradise have been related.

This is a good way [of understanding] the generality of believers who come on the Resurrection as believers and their children are joined with them, as the Book and hadiths have related. However, stating this decisively about a single person among the believers in particular is not possible due to the fear that his condition may change in the end and he may return to the sorrow that was written for him. Likewise, stating that decisively about a single child is not possible due to our lack of knowledge concerning the ultimate condition of who he follows and whether the Pen wrote joy or sorrow for him. The Prophet's ﷺ censure of decisiveness in the hadith of 'Ā'ishah ؓ is of this meaning. We say whatever the Book and the Sunnah has related concerning the generality of the believers and their children, yet we do not state anything decisively about individuals due to what we have mentioned. In this is a reconciliation of all that is related in this chapter, and Allah is most knowledgeable.

Whoever took the first opinion of not speaking about their affair made their test and the test of the children of those who ascribe partners to Allah in the Afterlife adduced the report of al-Aswad ibn Sarī' that the Prophet ﷺ said:

There are four on the Day of Resurrection: a deaf man who does not hear, a man who is intellectually-deficient, a decrepit man, and a man who died in the period between messengers. As for the deaf man, he says: 'Lord, Islam came and I did not hear anything.' As for the intellectually-deficient, he says: 'Lord, Islam came and boys were discarding me with dung.' As for the decrepit man, he says: 'Lord, Islam came and I did not comprehend anything.' As for he who died in the period between messengers, he says: 'O Lord! A messenger did not come to me.' So He makes a covenant with them that they do not disobey Him, and sends for them to be entered into the Fire. By He in whose hand is Muḥammad's soul, if they were to enter it, there would be nothing but coolness and security for them. (Aḥmad)

There is also a chain from Qatādah, from Ḥasan, from Abū Rāfi' on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, from the Prophet ﷺ with a similar meaning; and this chain is sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*).

On the authority of Anas:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘On the Day of Resurrection whoever died in the period between messengers, an old decrepit man, a demented person and the child who does not reason will be brought. They will speak with their arguments and excuses and a neck is delivered from the Fire. Their Lord says to them: “Indeed I sent messengers to people from among themselves, and now I am the messenger of Myself to you—enter the Fire.” Those for whom sorrow was written say: “Our Lord! We flee from it!” As for the people of joy, then they proceed until they enter it. These enter Paradise, and the former enter the Fire. He says to those who did not obey Him: “I commanded you to enter the Fire and you disobeyed me despite hearing the command directly from Me, so you would have denied my messengers even more fiercely.”’ (Abū Ya‘lā)

This relates to how those of the second position should view the children of Muslims: whoever is not delivered to one of his parents as a believer on the Resurrection, his test is in the Afterlife insofar as he does not find someone to follow and join in Paradise.

CHAPTER 18

LIFESPAN AND PROVISION

Allah said:

فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ

‘When their time comes, they do not postpone it for a moment nor do they have it come before’ (Qur’ān 7:34).

‘Lifespan’ is an expression of the time in which the action of life is cut off, just as the appointment of a debt is an expression of the time in which the debt is collected. The appointed time of the killed and the dead is at the exit of their souls. His saying,

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ

‘He forgives you of your sins’ (Qur’ān 71:4)

means ‘ascribing partners’,

وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

‘and delays you until an appointed time’ (Qur’ān 71:4)

means—and Allah is most knowledgeable—‘without a punishment,’
and

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ

‘Verily when Allah’s appointment comes it is not delayed’ (Qur’ān 71:4)

means ‘death’. Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād al-Firā’ said: ‘He meant only the appointed time according to you.’ Likewise, His saying.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَهُوَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ

‘He it is who begins the creation then repeats it, and that is easier for Him’ (Qur’ān 30:27)

means that it is easier for Him according to you with regards to your knowledge. This has the same meaning as what Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī ‘Amr informed us. He said: ‘Abū ‘l-‘Abbās told us that Muḥammad ibn al-Jahm told him on the authority of al-Firā” and mentioned the statement.

He said about provision:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

‘There is no moving creature on the earth except that its provision depends on Allah’ (Qur’ān 11:6).

We know that not all legally-responsible people consume the permissible, so if He did not provide them with the prohibited, He would not provide for most people due to them consuming the prohibited. Therein is an indication that all of what the animal is nourished with from the permissible and the prohibited is his provision. This includes the permissible and the prohibited that the legally responsible consume, and the milk that children drink which they do not own, and other than this from what animals consume despite them not having ownership.

On the authority of Ḥudhayfah ibn Asyad:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘An angel is assigned to the embryo after it has settled in the womb for 40 or 45 nights. The angel says: “What is it, Lord? Is it to be sorrowful or joyful?” Allah ﷻ declares one of them and it is written. Then the angel says: “Is it a male or a female, Lord?” Allah ﷻ declares one of them and it is written. Its deeds, appointed time, provision and what it leaves behind are written. Then the page is lifted, and nothing is added to it or diminished from it.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālik:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily Allah ﷻ assigns an angel to the womb. The angel says: “Lord, is it just a clinging thing? Lord, is it just a piece of flesh?” So if Allah wills to form it, the angel says: “Lord, is it a male or a female? [Is it to be] sorrowful or joyful? What is its provision? What is its appointed time?” So this is written while he is in his mother’s stomach.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd:

Umm Ḥabībah said: ‘O Allah! Please me with my husband the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, my father Abū Sufyān and my brother Mu‘āwiyah!’ So the Prophet ﷺ said to her: ‘You have supplicated Allah for known appointments, assigned provisions and fulfilled effects for which nothing comes ahead of time and nothing is delayed after its time. If you had asked Allah to give you well-being, to grant you refuge, or protect you from the punishment of the Fire or the grave it would have been better or more preferable.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Let none of you consider his provision slow, for indeed Jibrīl ﷺ put in my conscience that none of you leaves the world until he completes his provision. So fear Allah, people and be courteous in seeking.’ (Ḥākim)

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh and others also narrate this from the Prophet ﷺ.

CHAPTER 19

ON FAITH

Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ، الَّذِينَ يَقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ، أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا

‘The believers are only those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned; and when His verses are recited to them, they increase them in faith; and they rely on their Lord; and those who establish the prayer and spend of what I have given them—they are the true believers’ (Qur’ān 8:2–4).

He informed us that the believers are those who combine these deeds, some of which occur in the heart, some with the tongue, some with both of them and the rest of the body, some with both of them or one of them, and with wealth.

There is also a notification in what Allah mentioned concerning these deeds of what He did not mention. He informed us of the increase of their faith through the recitation of His signs to them. Therein is an indication that these deeds and what He notified us about them are from the constituents of faith, and that faith increases and decreases. If faith is subject to increase it is subject to decrease. According to this verse and whatever else has its meaning from the Book and the Sunnah, the majority of the People of Hadith were of the opinion that the term ‘faith’ comprises acts of obedience—whether required or voluntary—and that they are of three divisions.

So concerning the first division, a person disbelieves by abandoning it. This is the belief in whatever is required to believe and for a person to profess belief in. Concerning the second division, a person sins or disobeys by abandoning it, yet does not disbelieve so long as he does not deny its obligation. These are the required acts of obedience, such as the prayer, zakat, fasting, the hajj and avoiding the prohibited. Concerning the third division, a person misses out on the preferable by abandoning it, yet is neither a sinner nor a disbeliever. These are voluntary acts of worship.

The scholars differ about how all of these are termed ‘faith’. Among them is he who says that all of that is faith in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, because in the language

‘faith’ means ‘affirmation’ (*taṣḍīq*), and every act of obedience is an affirmation because one does not obey he whose existence or command is not established. In addition, there is he who says that the creed (not profession) (*al-i‘tiqād dūna al-iqrār*) is faith in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and the remaining acts of obedience constitute faith to Allah and His Messenger. So, affirmation of Allah is establishing and admitting His existence; and affirmation for Him is the acceptance of His laws and following His ordinances with the understanding that they are correct, wise and just. Likewise is affirmation of the Prophet ﷺ and affirmation for him. We have mentioned its clarification and evidence in *Kitāb al-Īmān* and *Kitāb al-Jāmi‘*, and here we will mention a portion of that.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘It was said to the Prophet ﷺ: “What is your view of those who died and only prayed towards Jerusalem?” So Allah ﷻ revealed:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

“Allah will not waste their faith” (Qur’ān 2:143)’

(Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī and Aḥmad). Al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib also narrates this in a more complete form (in Bukhārī and Muslim). In this is an indication that He called their prayer towards Jerusalem ‘faith’. If that is established regarding the prayer, then it is established regarding all other acts of obedience. Indeed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ named ‘purification’ as ‘faith’. He said in the hadith of Abū Mālik al-Ash‘arī: ‘Purification is half of faith’ (Muslim).

In the hadith about the delegation of ‘Abd al-Qays, he referred to the following as ‘faith’: the testimony of faith, establishing the prayer, paying zakat, fasting Ramadan, the hajj and divvying a fifth of the spoils. On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

The delegation of ‘Abd al-Qays arrived before the Prophet ﷺ. He said: ‘Welcome to the delegation who are not humiliated!’ They said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Between you and us are the disbelievers of Muḍar, and we cannot reach you except in the sacred months. So give us something we can do and can call those we left behind to.’ He said: ‘I command you with faith. Do you know what faith is? To testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, to establish the prayer, to pay zakat, to fast Ramadan and to make the hajj to the House.’ And I think he said ‘and to give a fifth of spoils.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Furthermore, he called all the branches of the religion ‘faith’ in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Faith is 60 or 70 odd branches. The best of them is testifying that there is no god but Allah, and the least of them is removing debris from

the road. Shyness is also from the branches of faith.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

The Prophet was asked about which believer is of more complete (*akmal*) faith. He said: ‘A man who strives in Allah’s path with himself and his possessions and a man who worships Allah in seclusion and has relieved the people of his evil’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The most complete of the believers in faith is the best of them in character”’ (Aḥmad). He meant by saying ‘the most complete of the believers in faith’—and Allah is most knowledgeable—that ‘among the most complete of the believers in faith,’ joining between it and everything else related with this meaning. This wording is permissible in Arabic. They say ‘most complete’ and ‘the best’ (*afḍal*) with the intent of ‘among the most complete’ and ‘among the best’.

On the authority of Abū Umāmah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Whoever loves for Allah, hates for Allah, gives for Allah and withholds for Allah, he has completed his faith”’ (Abū Dāwūd). Sahl ibn Mu‘ādh ibn Anas al-Jahnī relates this from his father from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and adds ‘and marries for Allah, he has completed his faith.’

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī said:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘Whoever among you sees something objectionable and is able to change it with his hand then let him do so. If he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then with his heart, and that is the weakest faith.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Anas: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Whoever said there is no god but Allah and there is a grain of faith in his heart, he will exit the Fire”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī narrates that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Whoever has a mustard seed of faith in his heart’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

The hadiths wherein the laws of Islam are called ‘faith’, ‘faith’ and ‘Islam’ are both used as expressions of a single religion—if *Islām* is [taken in its] literal sense (and not with the meaning of ‘surrendering’ (*istislām*))—and [indications] that faith increases and decreases are many besides what we have mentioned; but what we have mentioned here is enough.

We have narrated the like from the Rightly-Guided Caliphs—Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī; then from ‘Abdullāh ibn Rawāḥah, Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal, ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Abū ‘d-Dardā’, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayrah,

‘Uthmān ibn Ḥanīf, ‘Umayr ibn Ḥabīb, Jundub and ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir (ﷺ); and from the Followers and their followers on the authority of a vast number of them.

It is also the opinion of the jurists of the major cities: Mālik ibn Anas, Awzā‘ī, Sufyān ath-Thawrī, Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah, Ḥammād ibn Zayd, Ḥammād ibn Salamah, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanzalī, and others from the People of Hadith. We also narrate this from Qutaybah ibn Sa‘īd from Judge Abū Yūsuf, and all of this is mentioned in *Kitāb al-Īmān*.

On the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (ﷺ): ‘The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “Faith is profession with the tongue, action with the limbs and knowledge in the heart”’ (Ibn Mājah). Muḥammad ibn Aslam aṭ-Ṭūsī and other than him corroborate this from ‘Alī ibn Mūsā ar-Riḍā (ﷺ). Shāfi‘ī said: ‘Faith is profession and action; it increases and decreases.’

As for saying ‘if Allah wills’ in relation to one’s faith, then a group of the Companions, the Followers and their followers used say such. Nonetheless, this is only in reference to the completion of faith and their remaining faithful in the future. As for the foundation of faith, then they did not doubt its existence in the present; and the condition of a person’s faith changing does not preclude him from being described with it in the present before changing; and Allah is most knowledgeable.

A man once asked al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī about faith. He said:

Faith is of two types. If you are asking about faith in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, Paradise, the Fire, the Resurrection and the Reckoning, then I am a believer. If you are asking me about Allah’s (ﷻ) saying ‘The believers are only those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned; and when His verses are recited to them, they increase them in faith; and they rely on their Lord; and those who establish the prayer and spend of what I have given them—they are the true believers,’ then by Allah, I do not know if I am among them or not.

Ḥasan did not hesitate concerning the foundation of his faith at the moment. He only hesitated concerning its completion, which Allah (ﷻ) promised to the people of Paradise with His saying:

لَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

‘They have degrees with their Lord, as well as forgiveness and generous provision’ (Qur’ān 8:4).

Sufyān ath-Thawrī said:

The Murji'ah have differed with us on three issues: we say that faith is profession and action, and they say it is profession without action; we say that it increases and decreases, and they say that it neither increases nor decreases; and we say that the people of the qibla are believers according to us, but as for [their true state according] to Allah, then Allah is most knowledgeable, yet they say that we are [definitely] believers to Allah.

Sufyān ath-Thawrī رحمہ اللہ related from the People of the Sunnah that they do not say decisively that they are believers to Allah—i.e. in the future—because Allah ﷻ knows the Unseen, so He is the Knower of what the slave's future holds and what he will die upon. We do not know, so we entrust the affair of what we do not know to its Knower out of fear of a bad ending. We say 'if Allah wills' with this understanding, and hope in Allah ﷻ that He establishes us with the confirmed word in the life of this world and in the Afterlife.

The hadiths relating the Pen's recording all that will be, the return of every human being to the sorrow or joy that was written for him and his death upon that preclude saying decisively what will be in the end, and are understood to be according to Allah's will and with fear of one's state changing. May Allah protect us from that with His grace and extensive mercy!

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Verily a man does the deeds of the people of Paradise, yet it is written in the Book that he is from the people of the Fire. Upon reaching his death, he changes and does the deeds of the people of the Fire, so he dies and enters the Fire. A man does the deeds of the people of the Fire, yet it is written in the Book that he is from the people of Paradise. Upon reaching his death, he changes and does the deeds of the people of Paradise, so he dies and enters Paradise.' (Muslim)

The supporting narrations to this hadith are many, from 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd and other than him from the Prophet ﷺ.

In the hadith of Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sā'idī is the Prophet's ﷺ saying: 'Deeds are only with the final state' (Bukhārī and Muslim). In the hadith of Usāmah ibn Zayd about the description of Paradise, the Prophet ﷺ was asked: 'Do we exert ourselves for it, O Messenger of Allah?' He said: 'Say "if Allah wills"' (Ibn Mājah).

CHAPTER 20

ON THE PERPETRATORS OF MAJOR SINS

Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ

‘Verily Allah does not forgive partners being ascribed to Him’ (Qur’ān 4:116),

meaning [He forgives] whatever is less than ascribing partners for whomever He wills without any punishment. He might punish some of them for the sins they committed, then pardon them and enter them into Paradise due to their faith, because of His saying:

إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا

‘We do not waste the reward of he who did good deeds’ (Qur’ān 18:30);

and



إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

‘Verily Allah does not do a particle’s weight of wrong. If there is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives a huge reward from Himself’ (Qur’ān 4:40).


On the authority of ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit ﷺ:

We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said: ‘Pledge to me that you will not ascribe any partners to Allah, that you will not steal and that you will not fornicate.’ Then he recited to them [the aforementioned] verse and said: ‘Whoever among you fulfills that, his reward is on Allah. Whoever is afflicted with something of that and is punished for it, then it is a penance for him. Whoever is afflicted with something of that and Allah conceals it for him, then his fate is up to Allah—if He wills He forgives him, and if He wills He punishes him.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)



Once a man from Banū Kinānah called Makhdajī heard a man in the Levant called Abū Muḥammad saying that the *witr* prayer is required (*wājib*). Makhdajī said:

I went to ‘Ubādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit and bumped into him as he was going to the mosque. I informed him about what Abū Muḥammad said. ‘Ubādah  said: ‘Abū Muḥammad has lied. I heard the Messenger of Allah  say: “Allah has prescribed the prayers for the slaves. Whoever does them without wasting anything from them due to taking their right lightly has a guarantee from Allah that He will enter him into Paradise. Whoever does not do them has no such guarantee with Allah. If He wills He punishes him, and if He wills He enters him into Paradise.’ (Abū Dāwūd, Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)


On the authority of Jābir:

A man once came to the Prophet  and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What are the two obligations?’ He said: ‘Whoever dies without ascribing any partners to Allah enters Paradise. Whoever dies whilst ascribing any partners to Allah shall enter the Fire.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk:

The Messenger of Allah  said: ‘Three things are from the foundation of faith: restraining from whoever says ‘there is no god but Allah’—we do not excommunicate him for a sin nor expel him from Islam for a deed; jihad is ongoing from since Allah  sent me until the latter part of my community fights the Antichrist, neither the tyranny of a tyrant nullifies it nor the justice of a just ruler; and faith in predetermination.’ (Abū Dāwūd)

These hadiths have supporting narrations that we have mentioned in *Kitāb al-Īmān* and *Kitāb al-Ba‘th wa an-Nushur*. The Companions, the Followers and their followers among the People of the Sunnah who have passed followed this.

Shāfi‘ī  said in his book *al-Waṣiyyah*:

He made the Afterlife an abode of permanence and recompense for whatever good or bad was done in the world. If He does not pardon, then His praise is magnified; and this is the opinion of the jurists of the major cities. They say about the threatening verses that that is His recompense, and if Allah wills to pardon His recompense regarding whatever is less than ascribing partners, then He does it.

Abū Majlāz said about His saying,


وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ


‘Whoever kills a believer deliberately, his recompense is Hell’ (Qur’ān 4:93):

‘It is his recompense. If Allah wills to pardon his recompense, He does so.’

Hishām ibn Ḥassān said:

We were with Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn and a man said to him ‘Whoever kills a believer deliberately, his recompense is Hell,’ until he finished the verse. Muḥammad became angry and said: ‘What do you know about this verse: “Verily Allah does not forgive partners being ascribed to Him, and forgives whatever is less than that for whomever He wills” (Qur’ān 4:48)? Get up and get out!’ So he was removed .

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar :

We did not cease to refrain from speaking about forgiveness for people of major sins until we heard the Prophet  say: ‘Verily Allah does not forgive partners being ascribed to Him, and forgives whatever is less than that for whomever He wills.’ He also said: ‘Indeed I have saved my supplication to intercede for the people of major sins from my community on the Day of Resurrection.’ So we refrained from much of what was in ourselves, spoke about it and hoped.

Nāfi‘ and Bakr ibn ‘Abdullāh also narrate from Ibn ‘Umar a supporting narration for the above narration; and Allah is most knowledgeable.

On the authority of ‘Awn ibn ‘Abdullāh:

Luqmān said to his son: ‘O my little son! Hope in Allah with a hope in which you do not feel secure from His plot. Fear Allah with a fear in which you do not despair of His mercy.’ He said: ‘O my father! How do I do that when my heart is just one?’ He said: ‘A believer has two hearts: a heart with which he hopes and a heart with which he fears.’

CHAPTER 21

THE INTERCESSION

Allah ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ:

عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

‘Perhaps your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station’ (Qur’ān 17:79);

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ

‘Your Lord will give you and you will be pleased (Qur’ān 93:5);

and

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا، ثُمَّ نُنْجِي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ
الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جَذِيًّا

‘There is not one among you except that he passes it—a binding decree of your Lord. Then We will save those who were God-fearing and leave the wrongdoers kneeling therein’ (Qur’ān 19:71–72).

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “I am the first intercessor on the Day of Resurrection and the prophet with the most followers. Among the prophets is he who comes on the Day of Resurrection with only one believer”’ (Muslim).

On the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “I am the leader of the messengers, without boasting. I am the Seal of the Prophets, without boasting. I am the first intercessor and the one granted intercession, without boasting”’ (Dārimī).

On the authority of Anas: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Every prophet had a prayer that he prayed for his community. I have saved my prayer to intercede for my community”’ (Muslim). Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Aqīl and others narrate the same meaning from the Prophet ﷺ.

Anas narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

People will be gathered on the Day of Resurrection and will be concerned about that (Ibn ‘Ubayd said: ‘will be inspired to do that’). They will say: ‘If only we sought

intercession with our Lord so that He may relieve us of this place of ours!’ So they go to Ādam ﷺ and say: ‘You are the father of creation. Allah created you with His hand, breathed His spirit into you and ordered the angels to prostrate to you. Intercede for us with our Lord so that He may relieve us of this place of ours.’ He will say: ‘I am not the one to do that for you,’ and he will mention his shortcoming and will be shy before his Lord due to it; [and he will add:] ‘Rather, go to Nūḥ, the first messenger that Allah sent.’



So they go to Nūḥ ﷺ and he will say: ‘I am not the one to do that for you,’ and he will mention his shortcoming and will be shy before his Lord due to it; [and he will add:] ‘Rather, go to Ibrāhīm—he whom Allah took as a dear friend.’

So they go to Ibrāhīm ﷺ and he will say: ‘I am not the one to do that for you,’ and he will mention his shortcoming and will be shy before his Lord due to it; [and he will add:] ‘Rather, go to Mūsā—he whom Allah spoke to and gave the Torah.’


So they go to Mūsā ﷺ and he will say: ‘I am not the one to do that for you,’ and he will mention his shortcoming and will be shy before his Lord because of it; [and he will add:] ‘Rather, go to ‘Īsā, the Spirit of Allah and His Word.’

So they go to ‘Īsā, the Spirit of Allah and His Word ﷺ and he will say: ‘I am not the one to do that for you. Rather, go to Muḥammad, a slave whom Allah has forgiven the first and the last of his shortcomings.’



So they come to me, and I seek permission from my Lord and He gives me permission. When I see Him, I fall prostrate. He leaves me like that for however long He wills ﷺ. It is then said: ‘O Muḥammad! Lift your head! Speak and you will be heard, ask and you will be given, intercede and you will be granted intercession.’ So I praise my Lord with words of praise that my Lord will teach me. I am given a limit, so I bring people out of the Fire and escort them to Paradise. Then I return and fall prostrate a second time. He leaves me like that for however long He wills to leave me, then it is said to me: ‘Lift your head, O Muḥammad! Speak and you will be heard, ask and you will be given, intercede and you will be granted intercession.’ So I praise my Lord with words of praise that my Lord will teach me. I am given a second limit, so I bring people out of the Fire and escort them to Paradise. Then I return and and I seek permission from my Lord and He gives me permission. When I see Him, I fall prostrate. He leaves me like that for however long He wills ﷺ, then it is said to me: ‘Lift your head, O Muḥammad! Speak and you will be heard, ask and you will be given, intercede and you will be granted intercession.’ So I praise my Lord with words of praise that my Lord will teach me. I am given a third limit, so I enter people into Paradise until I return. Thereupon I say: ‘O Lord! No one remains in the Fire except he for whom the Qur’ān dictates an eternity therein.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)


Abū Hurayrah  and others also narrate the Hadith of the Intercession in its entirety from the Prophet .

On the authority of Anas:




The Prophet  said: ‘Whoever said “there is no god but Allah” and there is a barley grain’s weight of goodness in his heart will exit the Fire. Whoever said “there is no god but Allah” and there is a wheat grain’s weight of goodness in his heart will exit the Fire. Whoever said “there is no god but Allah” and there is a particle’s weight of goodness in his heart will exit the Fire.’

Hishām narrated ‘particle’, while Shu‘bah narrated ‘pearl’. The narration of Hishām ad-Dastawā’i is sounder, as stated by Sa‘īd ibn Abī ‘Arūbah.

On the authority of ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn: ‘The Prophet  said: “A people will exit from the Fire through the intercession of Muḥammad , so they will enter Paradise and be called ‘the People from Hell’” (Bukhārī).

On the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh: ‘I heard with these two ears of mine the Messenger of Allah say: “Verily Allah  will remove a people from the Fire and put them in Paradise” (Bukhārī and Muslim). Ḥammād ibn Zayd and ‘Amr ibn Dinār narrated this with the addition ‘through the intercession’.

Yazīd al-Faqīr said:

As a young man, I used to be enamoured with one of the opinions of the Khawārij. We went with a large group to make the hajj, and then went out to the people. We passed by Madīnah while Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh was sitting against a column of the mosque discussing the Messenger of Allah  with the people. He mentioned the people from Hell. I said: ‘O Companion of the Messenger of Allah! What is this that you are discussing, when Allah said: “Indeed whoever You put in the Fire You have disgraced him” (Qur’ān 3:192) and “Every time they want to exit from it they are returned to it” (Qur’ān 32:20). What do you say?’ So he said to me: ‘My son, do you read the Qur’ān?’ I said yes. He said: ‘Have you heard about the Praiseworthy Station of Muḥammad , which Allah will raise him to?’ I said yes. He said: ‘It is the praiseworthy station through which Allah will bring out whoever He brings out from the Fire.’ Then he described the position of the bridge over the Fire and people’s crossing over it, and I was afraid that I would not remember that except for him claiming that people will exit from the Fire after having been in it. He said: ‘They will exit as if they were sprouting seeds, entering a river from the rivers of Paradise and bathing in it. Then they will come out as if from egg shells.’ We returned and said: ‘Woe to you! You believe that this old man would lie on the Messenger of Allah .

—by Allah—not one of us retained the position of the Khawārij except one.

In the hadith of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī in this chapter is a clarification of the state of he who remains in the Fire and he who exits from it. On the authority of Abū Saʿīd:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘As for the people of the Fire who are its denizens, then they do not die in it nor do they live. However, there are people who are afflicted by the Fire due to their sins until they are coal, and then permission is granted for the Intercession. Then they are brought one group after another and spread throughout the rivers of Paradise. Then it is said: “O people of Paradise! Pour out water for them!” So they are grown anew like water lilies of Paradise.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī: ‘We said: “O Messenger of Allah! Do we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?”’ Then he mentioned the hadith of the beatific vision as it has been mentioned previously, and then he mentioned the story of the caller on the Day of Resurrection and the prostration of he who prostrates. He said:

The Prophet said: ‘A bridge will be placed over Hell.’ We said: ‘May our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you! What is the bridge, O Messenger of Allah?’ He said: ‘It is extremely slippery, has prongs, hooks and spikes, and a sharp surface called “Suḍān”. The believers cross it like a bolt of lightning, a bird, a blink of an eye, the best racing steed, a rider, a sprinter, a walker or a crawler.’ (Abū Aḥmad said: ‘The crawler is in the Fire of Hell.’) [Then the Prophet ﷺ continued:] ‘By He in whose hand is my soul, none of you implores the Truth more intensely than those among the believers who have passed the bridge and see their brothers. They have been delivered from the Fire and say: “Our Lord! Our brothers used to pray with us, fast with us, make the hajj with us and fight jihad with us, yet the Fire has taken them!” He says: “Go! Whoever’s face you know, bring him out, and his face is off-limits to the Fire.” They will find those whom the Fire has taken up to his feet, up to half his shin, up to his knees and up to his groin. They will bring many people out from it and then return. They will speak and He says: “Go! Whoever you find that has a carat’s weight of good in his heart, bring him out.” They will bring many people out and then return. They will speak, and He does not cease to say the same thing, until He says: “Go! Bring out whoever you find that has a particle’s weight of good in his heart,” so they bring him out.’ (When Abū Saʿīd used to relate this hadith he would say: ‘If you do not believe, then read: “Verily Allah does not do a particle’s weight of wrong; and if there is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives a huge reward from Himself” (Qurʾān 4:40).’) The Prophet continued: ‘They say: “Our Lord, we have not left any good in it.” He says: “Does anyone remain except the Most Merciful of the Merciful? The angels have interceded, the Prophets have interceded and the believers have interceded. Does anyone remain except the Most Merciful of the Merciful?” So He takes a handful from the Fire and brings out a people

who return charred. They never once did any good deed for Allah. He puts them in a river in Paradise that is called “the River of Life” and they grow in it. By He in whose hand is my soul, they grow like the seed of a water lily. Have you not seen it? The shade beside it that yellows and the sun over it that turns it green?’ We said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! It is as if you were in pastures?’ He said: “They grow like that and come out like pearls. Marks are put on their necks and they are sent to Paradise. These are the people from Hell—those who Allah brought out of the Fire without them doing any deed or any good. Allah ﷻ says: “Take, and whatever you take is yours!” So they take until they are finished. Then they say: “If only Allah would give us what we have taken.” So Allah ﷻ says: “I have given you better than what you have taken.” They say: “O our Lord! What is better than what we have taken?” He says: “My pleasure—so I will not be angry.”

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘A people will exit the Fire and they will have been burned severely. They will enter Paradise and go to a river called “Life”. They bathe in it and bloom like a stem blooms. They stay in Paradise for a while and it is said to them: “Do you desire anything?” They say: “That this name be removed from us.” So it is removed from them.’ (Ibn Hibbān)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

People said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Will we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?’ He said: ‘Do you have any trouble seeing the sun in a cloudless sky?’ They said: ‘No, O Messenger of Allah!’ He said: ‘Do you have any trouble seeing the full moon in a cloudless sky?’ They said: ‘No, O Messenger of Allah!’ He said: ‘Verily you will see Him on the Day of Resurrection like that. He will gather the people on the Day of Resurrection and say: “Whoever worshipped something other than Me, then let him follow it.” So whoever worshipped the sun will follow the sun, whoever worshipped the moon will follow the moon, whoever worshipped false gods will follow false gods and this community will remain.”’ (Then he mentioned the rest of the hadith of the beatific vision.)

Then he said: ‘A bridge is placed over Hell, and I am the first to cross it. The prayer of the messengers that day is: “O Allah! Save us, save us!” The bridge has prongs like the thorns of a cyperus. Have you seen the thorn of the cyperus?’ They said: ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allah!’ He said: ‘Indeed it is like a cyperus thorn except only Allah ﷻ knows its size. It snatches people according to their deeds. Among them is he who is destroyed by his deeds; and among them is the pulverized, who will then be saved. When Allah finishes judging the slaves and wills to remove from the Fire whomever He

wills to have mercy on among those who testified that there is no god but Allah, He orders the angels to remove them. They will be known by the mark of prostration. They will remove them, and they will have been roasted. So water called “the water of life” will be poured on them, and they will grow like a seed of a water lily. A man will remain with his face toward the Fire and say: “O Lord! Its smell has permeated me and its flames have burned me! Turn my face away from the Fire!” He does not cease to pray to Allah, so He says: “If I gave you that perhaps you would ask for something else.” He then said: “No, by Your might, I will not ask for anything else.” So He turns his face away from the Fire, and thereafter he says: “Bring me close to the gate of Paradise.” He says: “Did you not claim that you would not ask Me for anything else? Did you not give your word and your promise that you would not ask for anything else? Woe to you, O child of Ādam! How treacherous you are!” So he does not cease to pray. Allah ﷻ says: “If I gave you that perhaps you would ask for something else.” He says: ‘No, by Your might, I will not ask for anything else.’ So Allah gives with the word and the promise that he will not ask for anything else. He brings him close to the gate of Paradise, and when he is near it, Paradise is opened to him. When he sees what is in it, he is silent for however long Allah wills for him to be silent. Then he says: “My Lord, put me in Paradise!” He says: “Did you not claim that you would not ask Me for anything else? Did you not give your word and your promise that you would not ask for anything else? Woe to you, O child of Ādam! How treacherous you are!” Then he says: “O Lord! Do not make me the most sorrowful of your creation!” He does not cease to pray until he is given permission to enter it. When he enters it is said to him: “Wish for this,” so he wishes. Then it is said: “Wish for this, wish for this.” So he wishes until all his wishes are exhausted. Then it is said to him: “All of this is for you, along with its like.”

Abū Hurayrah said: ‘That man is the last to enter Paradise.’ Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī sat with Abū Hurayrah and did not change anything from his hadith until he arrived to his saying ‘All of this is for you, along with its like.’ Abū Sa‘īd said: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “All of this is for you, along with ten of its like.”’ So Abū Hurayrah said: ‘I memorized “along with its like.”’

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālik: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah ﷻ says: ‘Remove from the Fire whoever mentioned Me once or feared Me in a situation’”’ (Tirmidhī).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily every prophet has a prayer that is answered. Indeed I have saved my prayer to intercede for my community, and it includes among you—if Allah wills—whoever died without associating anything with Allah.’ (Muslim)

We narrate this from Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal, Abū Dharr, Abū Mūsā, ‘Awf ibn Mālīk and others (ﷺ) from the Prophet (ﷺ).

On the authority of Thābit ibn Anas: ‘The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “My intercession is for the people of major sins from my community”’ (at-Tirmidhī).

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk: ‘The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “My intercession is for the people of major sins from my community,” and he recited this verse:

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلَكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا

“If you avoid the major sins that you have been prohibited from, We will cover your sins for you and put you in a noble place” (Qur’ān 4:31).’

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: ‘I was given the choice between the intercession and half of my community entering Paradise. I chose the intercession because it is more general and more sufficient. Do you think that it is for the pious believers? No! Rather, it is for the guilty, tarnished sinners.’ (Aḥmad)

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān heard a man say: ‘O Allah! Make me among those who are included in the intercession of Muḥammad (ﷺ)!’ So he said: ‘Verily Allah has made the believers have no need for the intercession of Muḥammad (ﷺ). Rather, the intercession is for the believing guilty sinners and Muslims.”

Ibn ‘Abbās said about Allah’s (ﷻ) saying,

وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ ارْتَضَىٰ

‘They do not intercede except for he whom He is pleased’ (Qur’ān 21:28):

‘[Meaning:] those whom He is pleased with due to the testimony that there is no god but Allah.’

Suddī said:

I asked Murrah ibn al-Hamdānī about Allah’s (ﷻ) saying ‘There is not one of you except that he will pass it—a binding decree of your Lord’ (Qur’ān 21:71). So he told me that ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (رضي الله عنه) said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: ‘People will come to the Fire and pass according to their deeds. The first of them is like a lightning bolt, then like the wind, then like a racing horse, then like a rider, then a like a runner, then like a walker.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

Abū ‘l-Aḥwaṣ narrated from ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd that His saying ‘There is not one of you except that he will pass it’ means ‘the bridge over Hell’. We narrate from Ibn

‘Abbās that ‘to pass’ is ‘to enter’. He supported this with His saying:

‘You pass through it’ (Qur’ān 21:98),

and

فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ وَيُسَّ الْوُزْدُ الْمَوْرُودُ

‘He made them pass through the Fire, and what a terrible passage to take’ (Qur’ān 11:98).

We narrate from Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh that the Prophet ﷺ said: “‘To pass’ is ‘to enter’”: “Then We will save those who were God-fearing and leave the wrongdoers kneeling therein” (Muslim). We have mentioned this in *Kitāb al-Jāmi‘* and *Kitāb al-Ba‘th* with all the rest of the narrations about it.

CHAPTER 22

FAITH IN ALLAH'S ANGELS, BOOKS AND MESSENGERS, THE RESURRECTION, THE RECKONING, THE SCALE, PARADISE, THE FIRE, THE BASIN AND THE SIGNS OF THE HOUR

Allah ﷻ said:

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

‘The Messenger believes in what was revealed to him, as well as the believers. All believe in Allah, His angels, His Books and His messengers’ (Qur’ān 2:285);

زَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُعْثُوا قُلْ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّي لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

‘Those who disbelieve claim that they will not be resurrected. Say: To the contrary, you will most certainly be resurrected, and then most certainly be informed about what you did. That is easy to Allah’ (Qur’ān 64:7);

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ، لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ، يَوْمَ يَقُومُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

‘Do they not believe that they will be resurrected for an immense day—a day in which people will stand before the Lord of the Worlds?’ (Qur’ān 83:4–6);

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ، فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا، وَيَنْقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا،
وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ، فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو ثُبُورًا، وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا

‘As for he who is given his book in his right hand, he will have an easy reckoning and happily turn to his family. As for he who is given his book behind his back, then he will cry out for destruction and head to Hell’ (Qur’ān 84:7–12);

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا

‘We will lay down the Scales of Justice on the Day of Resurrection, and no soul will be wronged anything’ (Qur’ān 21:47);

and

وَالْوِزْنَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ، وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَظْلِمُونَ

‘The Scale on that day is the truth. Whoever’s balance is heavy, those are the successful. Whoever’s balance is light, those are the ones who lose themselves through having done wrong to Our signs’ (Qur’ān 7:8–9).

The verses about this are many. He said about Paradise:

أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

‘Prepared for the God-fearing’ (Qur’ān 3:133).

He said about the Fire:

أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

‘Prepared for the disbelievers’ (Qur’ān 3:131).

The ‘prepared’ is created and existent. He said about Paradise:

عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

‘Its width is the heavens and the earth, prepared for the God-fearing’ (Qur’ān 3:133).

The ‘non-existent’ has no width. He said about the Basin:

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

‘Verily we have given you Kawthar’ (Qur’ān 108:1).

He said about the signs of the Hour:

وَمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي إِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا ۗ قُلِ انتَظِرُوا إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ

‘On the day that some of your Lord’s signs come, a person’s faith will not benefit them insofar as he did not believe before nor did he earn some good through his faith. Say: Wait, for indeed we are waiting’ (Qur’ān 6:158).

On the authority of Yaḥyā ibn Ya‘mar:

I said to Ibn ‘Umar: ‘O Abū ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān! Indeed there are people who claim that there is no predetermination.’ He said: ‘Is one of them with us?’ I said no. He said: ‘Then convey to them from me when you meet them that Ibn ‘Umar has nothing to do with them before Allah and that they have nothing to do with me. I heard ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ say:

Once we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when a man without the mark of travel and who was not a Bedouin came to him and sat like one of you sits in the prayer. Then he put his hands on the knees of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: ‘O Muḥammad! What is Islam?’ He said: ‘Islam is that you testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, that you establish the prayer, pay zakat, make the hajj and umrah to the House, perform the purifying bath after being in a state of major ritual impurity, complete wudu and fast during Ramadan.’ He said: ‘If I do this, I am a Muslim?’ He said yes. He said: ‘You have told the truth.’

He said: ‘O Muḥammad! What is faith?’ He said: ‘That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, Paradise, the Fire, the Scale, the Resurrection after death and predetermination (its good and its bad).’ He said: ‘If I do this, I am a believer?’ He said yes. He said: ‘You have told the truth.’ He said: ‘O Muḥammad! What is perfection of faith?’ He said: ‘That you work for Allah as if you see Him, for indeed if you do not see Him, He most certainly sees you.’ He said: ‘If I do this, I have done well?’ He said yes. He said: ‘You have told the truth.’ He said: ‘When is the Hour?’ He said: ‘Glory be to Allah! The questioned is no more knowledgeable about it than the questioner. If you like, I will inform you about its signs.’ He said yes. He said: ‘If you see barefooted, naked and poor shepherds compete in building tall structures and are kings.’ He said: ‘Who are the barefooted, naked and poor shepherds?’ He said: ‘Bedouin Arabs.’ He continued: ‘If you see the slave woman give birth to her mistress and her master, then that is from the signs of the Hour.’ He said: ‘You have told the truth.’ Then he got up and left. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘I must walk.’ So we sought after him but were unable to catch up with him. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Do you know who that was? That was Jibrīl ؑ. He came to teach you your religion, so take from him. By He in whose hand is my soul, he was never unrecognizable to me since he came to me except this one time—I did not know him until he left.’ (Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn Ḥibbān and Dāraqutnī)

In this hadith the Messenger of Allah ﷺ named the testimony of faith 'Islam', and in the hadith of Ibn 'Abbās about the delegation of 'Abd al-Qays he named it 'faith'. There is a signification in both hadiths that the two are names for a single thing. However, in the first hadith he explains 'faith' with what is explicitly included—which is affirmation—and explained 'Islam' with what is representative of it, even if its explicit name includes the representation and the representation includes the explicit name. This is like how he distinguished between these two and 'perfection of faith', even if 'faith' and 'Islam' are goodness and the goodness that he explained with sincerity and certainty is faith.

He meant by his saying about the signs of the Hour, 'the slave woman gives birth to her mistress and her master', the expansion of Islam and the abundance of prisoners to the extent that people seek children with slave women, and the slave woman gives birth to her master's daughter or son, so her son is like her master because he is her master's son. The sending of the Prophet ﷺ and the expansion of his shariah is among the signs of the Hour, meaning that there is no other prophet between him and it. Furthermore, no one knows when the Hour will be established except Allah (ﷻ).

We narrate from Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mar concerning this hadith that he said about 'faith': 'That you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, death, the Resurrection after death, the Reckoning, Paradise, the Fire and all of predetermination.'

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'I was commanded to fight the people until they testify that there is no god but Allah and believe in me and what I have come with. If they do that, then they have protected their blood and their wealth from me except for their due, and their reckoning is with Allah ﷻ.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

We believe in what Allah ﷻ revealed to His Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ concerning the Qur'ān. Its recording was not abrogated in his life, it remains preserved in his community and nothing has ever been added to or subtracted from it, just as Allah promised in His saying:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

'Verily We revealed the Remembrance and surely We are its preservers' (Qur'ān 15:9).

This is like His saying:

وَإِنَّهُ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ، لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

‘Verily it is a grand Book—falsehood does not approach it from the front or from behind’ (Qur’ān 41:41–42).

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: ‘Allah protects it from Satan, thus he does not add any falsehood to it nor detract any truth from it.’

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The people will stand for the Lord of the Worlds on the Day of Resurrection until one of them disappears in his sweat up to half his ears”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah from her father:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘Whoever is questioned about his account (*ḥisāb*) is destroyed.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Verily Allah ﷻ says: “As for he who is given his book in his right hand, he will have an easy reckoning (*ḥisāban yasīran*).”’ He said: ‘That is the presentation (*‘arḍ*).’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

‘Ā’ishah once mentioned the Fire and cried. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ asked: ‘What has made you cry?’ She said: ‘I remembered the Fire so I cried. Do you remember your families on the Day of Resurrection?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

There are three places in which nobody remembers anyone: at the Scale until he knows whether his balance is light or heavy; at the submission of the book of deeds, where it is said ‘Here, read your book!’, until he knows whether his book is put in his right hand, left hand or behind his back; and at the bridge when it is put between the two sides of Hell.” (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “There are two phrases that are light on the tongue, beloved to the Beneficent and heavy on the Scale: ‘Glory be to Allah with His praise’ and ‘Glory be to Allah the Almighty’”¹ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

So, faith in the Scale is obligatory, due to what we have mentioned. It has been said about how deeds are weighed that the pages of good deeds are put in one scale and the pages of bad deeds in another, and then they are weighed. What indicates this has been related in some reports. It is also possible that Allah brings about bodies according to the number of good and bad deeds so that one of them is distinguished from the other and then they are weighed like bodies are weighed; and Allah is the most knowledgeable. We believe in whatever is related in the Truthful One’s report and interpret it with a correct understanding; and the enablement is through Allah.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Allah ﷻ says: “I have prepared for my righteous slaves what no eye has seen, no ear has heard and what has never occurred to the heart of a human being.”’ Then he recited: ‘Nobody knows the joy [lit. coolness of eyes] that has been hidden as a reward for them because of what they used to do’ (Qur’ān 32:17). (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk ؓ:

We were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one day and he said: ‘Woe to you! By He in whose hand is the soul of Muḥammad, if you saw what I have seen, you would laugh little and cry much.’ The Companions said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What have you seen?’ He said: ‘I have seen Paradise and the Fire.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily when one of you dies, his place is shown to him morning and evening. If he is from the people of Paradise, then his place among the people of Paradise [is shown to him]; and if he is from the people of the Fire, then his place among the people of the Fire [is shown to him]. It is said: “This is your place until Allah ﷻ resurrects you to it on the Day of Resurrection.”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘When I was taken to heaven I was brought to a river whose shores were domes of hollow pearls. I said: “What is this, Jibrīl?” He said: “This is Kawthar, which your Lord has given you.” So the angel lowered his hand and extracted from the river’s clay a strong musk.’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Abū Jamrah:

Abū Barzah entered upon ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, and [the latter] said: ‘This Companion of Muḥammad of yours is surely stocky!’ He [Abū Barzah] said: ‘I could not see living among a people who consider Muḥammad’s ﷺ companionship a shame!’ They said: ‘The commander has called you to ask you about the Basin.’ So he said: ‘What is it about? Is it true?’ He said: ‘Yes. Whoever denies it, Allah will not give him a drink from it.’ (Abū Dāwūd² and Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The Hour will not commence until the sun rises from the West. When it rises and the people see it, all of them will believe. Yet that is when

a person's faith will not benefit if he had not believed before or earned some good through his faith.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'There are three signs that, when they appear, a person's faith will not benefit if he had not believed before or earned some good through his faith: the sun's rising from the West, the Antichrist and the beast of the earth.' (Muslim)

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The Antichrist will appear in my community and stay among them 40—I do not know whether it is 40 days, 40 months or 40 years. Then Allah will send 'Īsā ibn Maryam ʿ—who resembles 'Urwah ibn Mas'ūd ath-Thaqafī—and he will seek him out and destroy him. The people will remain for seven years after him, and there will no enmity between any two persons. Then Allah will send a cool breeze from the direction of the Levant, and there will not remain anyone who has a particle's weight of faith in his heart except that it seizes him, to the extent that if one of you were in the recesses of a mountain it would enter it.'

He further said:

I heard this from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'The worst people will remain in utter frivolity and hedonism. They neither command the good nor censure the objectionable. Satan will take form and say to them: "Will you not respond?" Then he commands them to take idols and they worship them, while having abundant provision and living well. Then the trumpet is blown, and no one hears it except that he inclines the side of his neck—i.e. raises his neck. The first to hear it is a man plastering his cistern, and he is knocked out. No one remains except that he is knocked out. Then Allah sends a rain, as if it is drizzle, and people's bodies grow from it. Then the trumpet is blown again, and they stand and wait. It is said: "O people! Proceed to your Lord." "Hold them—indeed they are to be questioned" (Qur'an 37:24). Then it is said: "Remove the party of the Fire." It is said: "How many?" Then it is said: "999 from every 1,000.'" (Muslim)

Muḥammad ibn Ja'far said: 'Shu'bah told me this hadith a number of times and I read it to him.' The phrase 'raises his neck' is omitted from my copy.

On the authority of Zaynab, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Prophet ﷺ once woke up from sleep with his face red, saying three times ‘There is no god but Allah.’ [He added:] ‘Woe to the Arabs from an evil that has come near! The dam of Yājūj and Mājūj has been opened like this,’ and he formed a circle with his fingers. I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Will we be destroyed while there are righteous among us?’ He said: ‘Yes, if depravity is widespread.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

We have narrated the story of the Antichrist, the descent of ‘Īsā ibn Maryam ﷺ, the appearance of Yājūj and Mājūj and their destruction, and the commencement of the Hour from the hadith of an-Nawwās ibn Sam‘ān in *Kitāb al-Ba‘th*.

On the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘If there did not remain but a day of the world, Allah would most certainly prolong that day until He sends a man from my family whose name agrees with my name and whose father’s name agrees with my father’s name.’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad)

On the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “If no time remained but a day, Allah would certainly send a man from my family who will fill the earth with justice just as it was filled with tyranny.”’

‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd said: ‘The signs have been fulfilled except four—the sun’s rising from the West, the Antichrist, the Beast, and Yājūj and Mājūj—and with them, deeds are finalized.’ Then he recited ‘A day some of your Lord’s signs arrive’ (Qur’ān 6:158) and said ﷺ: ‘Meaning thereby the major signs.’

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (quoting Allah): ‘The son of Ādam denied Me and it is not fitting for him to deny Me. He cursed Me and it is not fitting for him to curse Me. As for his denial of Me, it is his saying “He will not return Me as He started Me,” and the first creation is no easier to Me than returning him. As for his cursing Me, it is his saying “Allah has taken a son,” while I am the Unique, the Absolute; I do not beget nor was I begotten, and no one has ever been comparable to Me.’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Abū Razīn al-‘Aqīlī:

I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! How will Allah revive the dead, and what is the sign of that in His creation?’ He said: ‘Have you not passed through a valley at a place, then passed through it and it has turned green, then passed through a place, then passed through it and it has turned green?’ I said: ‘Of course.’ He said: ‘Allah revives the dead like this, and that is His sign in His creation.’ (Aḥmad)

The wording of this hadith is from Abū ‘Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-‘Abbas al-Mu’addab. The wording ‘a valley destroyed in a place’ occurs in the narration of Ṣaghānī .

This has been related in Allah’s Book ﷻ. Allah ﷻ said: ‘You see the earth lifeless, then when We send water to it and it quivers and swells, and it grows and brings forth every splendid pair. That is because Allah is the Truth—He revives the dead and is powerful over everything’ (Qur’ān 22:5–6). The Qur’ānic verses about returning are abundant.

1 The transcription of the Arabic is: *subḥān Allāhi wa bi-ḥamdihi wa subḥān Allāhi’l-‘Azīm*. Ed.

2 Abū Dāwūd’s narration (no. 4749) has slightly different wording to the version used by Bayhaqī (in the print used for this translation), but the meaning of Abū Barzah’s response is the same. However, the version of Abū Dāwūd has ‘Ubaydullāh deny denigrating the companionship of the Prophet (ﷺ), and he instead says that it is the actually Abū Barzah’s ‘pride, not disgrace’ (*laka zayn ghayr shayn*); See *Sunan Abu Dawud*, 5:237–8. Ed.

CHAPTER 23

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE GRAVE

Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا
وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

‘Indeed, those who said “Our Lord is Allah,” then are upright—the angels descend upon them (saying): “Do not fear or be sad, and receive the good news of Paradise which you were promised” (Qur’ān 41:30).

Mujāhid said: ‘That is at death.’

Allah said about the disbelievers:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا
عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

‘If only you could see when the angels take back those who disbelieved, beating their faces and their behinds (saying): “Taste the burning punishment!” (Qur’ān 8:50).

They say this to them to let them know that they are headed to the burning punishment.

He said:

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَاسِطُو أَيْدِيهِمْ أَخْرِجُوا
أَنْفُسَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنتُمْ
عَنْ آيَاتِهِ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ

‘If only you could see the wrongdoers in the throes of death, when the angels extend their hands (saying): “Give up your souls! Today you are compensated with a humiliating punishment for what you used to say about Allah that was not true and for how you were arrogant about His signs” (Qur’ān 6:93).

These verses signify that the souls of the disbelievers are violently torn from them and that they are informed about the humiliating punishment that they are headed to. This is contrary to the believers, who will be given the glad tidings of the Paradise they were promised. He said about the people of Pharaoh:

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ

‘They are exposed to the Fire morning and evening, and on the day the Hour commences (it is said): “Enter the worst punishment, O people of Pharaoh!” (Qur’ān 40:46).

The hadith of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه is of this meaning; it has been mentioned in the previous chapter. Allah said:

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ وَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمِينَ

‘Allah will make firm those who believe with the firm word in the life of the world and the Afterlife, and Allah will misguide the wrongdoers’ (Qur’ān 14:27).

On the authority of al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘If the believer in his grave testifies that there is no god but Allah and knows Muḥammad, that is Allah’s saying ﷻ: “Allah will make firm those who believe with the firm word in the life of the world and the Afterlife.” (Bukhārī and Muslim)

Shu‘bah also mentions this hadith, except he said: ‘Verily the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Verily when the Muslim is questioned in the grave and testifies that there is no god but Allah and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, that is Allah’s saying. . .” then he mentions the hadith.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Indeed when the dead is placed in his grave, he certainly hears the flapping of people’s sandals when they leave him. If he was a believer, the prayer is at his head; the fast on his right; zakat on his left; and his good deeds of charity, maintaining family ties, kindness and goodness to people are at his feet. He is approached from the direction of his head and the prayer says: “There is no entry before me.” He is approached from his right and fasting says: “There is no entry before me.” He is approached from his left and zakat says: “There is no entry before me.” He

is approached from the direction of his feet and his good deeds of charity, maintaining family ties, kindness and goodness to people say: "There is no entry before me." It is said to him: "Sit up!" He sits up, and the sun appears to him as if it is setting. It is said to him: "What do you say about this man?" He says: "Let me pray." They say: "You will answer! Inform us about what we asked you about." He says: "What do you ask about?" They say: "What do you say about this man who was among you? What do you bear witness concerning him?" He says: "I testify that he is the Messenger of Allah, and that he came with the truth from Allah." It is said to him: "You lived according to that, died according to that, and according to that will be resurrected if Allah wills." Then a gate from the gates of Paradise is opened for him and it is said: "Look at your place in it and what Allah ﷻ has prepared for you therein." He increases in delight and happiness, and his grave is expanded 70 cubits and illumined for him. His body is returned as it started and a breeze of pleasant fragrance comes over him, brought by a bird that rests in a tree of Paradise.' One of the narrators, Muḥammad ibn 'Amr, said: 'I heard 'Amr ibn al-Ḥakam ibn Thawbān say: "He sleeps the sleep of a newly wed—no one wakes him except the most beloved of people to him—until Allah resurrects him."' Then he returned to the hadith of Abū Hurayrah: 'This is Allah's ﷻ saying: "Allah will make firm those who believe with the firm word in the life of the world and the Afterlife, and Allah will misguide the wrongdoers."'

[The Prophet continued:] 'If he was a disbeliever, he is approached from his head and nothing is there. Then he is approached from his right and nothing is there. He is approached from his left and nothing is there. He is approached from the direction of his feet and nothing is there. It is said to him: "Sit up!" He sits up, afraid and terrified. It is said to him: "Have you seen this man who was among you? Who was he and what do you say about him? What to you bear witness to concerning him?" He says: "What man?" It is said: "He who was among you." He will not be guided to his name until it is said to him: "Muḥammad." He says: "I do not know. I heard people say something, so I said it like the people said." It is said to him: "You lived according to that, died according to that, and according to that will be resurrected if Allah wills." Then a gate from the gates of the Fire is opened for him. It is said to him: "This is your place in the Fire and what Allah has prepared for you." He increases in regret and misery. Then a gate from the gates of Paradise is opened to him and it is said: "This was your place in Paradise and what Allah had prepared for you if you had obeyed." So he increases in regret and misery. Then his grave is tightened on him until his ribs come together.'

Abū Hurayrah said: 'That is Allah's (ﷻ) saying: 'Indeed he has a constricted life, and on the Day of Resurrection We raise him up blind" (Qurʾān 20:124).

Sa'īd ibn 'Āmir also narrated this from Muḥammad ibn 'Amr with an addition concerning the believer: 'Then a gate in the direction of the Fire is opened for him and it is said: "Look at your place and at what Allah had prepared for you if you had disobeyed," so he increases in delight and happiness' (Aḥmad).

On the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'O 'Umar! How will you be when you are four by two cubits in the ground and you see Munkar and Nakīr?' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What are Munkar and Nakīr?' He said: 'The interrogators of the grave. Their eyes are like lightning and their voices are like thunder. They have a hammer with them. If the people of Mina gathered to move it they would not be able to lift it, yet it is easier for them to lift than this staff of mine. So, they test you, and if you stammer or meander they will strike you with a blow by which you would turn to dust.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! I will be in this condition of mine?' He said: 'Yes, and I hope to spare you of them.' ('Abd ar-Razzāq, with a *mursal*¹ narration)

This hadith has only been transmitted with this chain (*gharīb*). The sole narrator is Mufaḍḍal. We have narrated it from another direction on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās, and through another sound path on the authority of 'Aṭa' ibn Yasār from the Prophet ﷺ in a *mursal* narration about the story of 'Umar, wherein he said 'three cubits and a handspan by a cubit and a handspan', and did not mention the hammer.

We narrate a hadith from al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib from the Prophet ﷺ about the punishment of the grave: 'His soul is returned to his body and two angels come to him' (Abū Dāwūd, Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

The returning of the soul being one part, the questioning being one part, and the punishment being one part is not something that is rationally impermissible, nor is there any impossibility for what the reports have related about the punishment of the grave being separate parts. It is as Allah wills, for whomever Allah wills, and until Allah wills. We seek refuge from Allah's punishment! The reports about the punishment of the grave are many, and we have dedicated a book that includes all that has been related about it from the Book, the Sunnah and statements of the Companions. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sought refuge from it and ordered his community to seek refuge from it.

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah, a Jewish woman once came to her and mentioned the punishment of the grave. She said: 'Allah grant you refuge from the punishment of grave.' 'Ā'ishah said:

So I asked the Prophet ﷺ about the punishment of the grave. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'The punishment of the grave is true.' I did not hear him pray there-after except that he sought refuge from the punishment of the grave in the prayer. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘When one of you finishes his prayer, let him pray for four things, then pray for whatever he wants: “O Allah! I seek refuge in You from the punishment of Hell, the punishment of the grave, the tribulations of life and death, and the tribulation of the Antichrist.”’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to teach us this prayer like he used to teach us a *surah* from the Qur’ān: ‘Say: “O Allah! Verily I seek refuge in You from the punishment of Hell! I seek refuge in You from the punishment of the grave! I seek refuge in You from the tribulation of the Antichrist! I seek refuge in You from the tribulations of life and death.”’ (Muslim)

Shāfi‘ī said:

Indeed the will of the slaves is up to Allah ﷻ. They do not will unless Allah, Lord of the Worlds, wills. Indeed people’s deeds are a creation of Allah’s and an action of the slaves. Predetermination, its good and its bad, is surely from Allah ﷻ. The punishment of the grave is true, the questioning of people in the grave is true; the Resurrection, the Reckoning, Paradise, the Fire, and other than these that the Sunnah has come with and has manifested on the tongues of the scholars and their followers in the lands of the Muslims are true.

1 ‘The term *mursal* is used when a Follower omits the name of a Companion and reports directly from the Prophet ﷺ. This is seen as a flaw in the *isnād* [‘chain of transmission’], as it can happen that a Follower might have been narrating from another Follower and not necessarily a Companion. [. . .] Scholars who came after the widespread dispersion of knowledge such as imam ash-Shāfi‘ī (d. 204/820) and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) held the view that *irsāl* (the verbal noun of *mursal*) is a defect in the *isnād* which renders a ḥadīth *weak*. However, omission through *irsāl* did not pose a problem for scholars who came before this period such as imam Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik, and accepting such ḥadīth was perfectly sound according to them.’ Zafar Aḥmad al-‘Uthmānī, *Qawā‘id fī ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth: Underlying Principles of the Sciences of Ḥadīth*, trans. Abdassamad Clarke and Aisha Bewley (London: Turath, 2014), 27. Ed.

CHAPTER 24

ADHERING TO THE SUNNAH AND AVOIDING INNOVATION

Allah ﷻ said:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

‘Allah has indeed gifted the believers by sending a messenger to them from among themselves. He recites His signs to them, purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the wisdom, whereas beforehand they were in clear error’ (Qur’ān 3:164).

He also said:

فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ

‘If you dispute about anything, then refer to Allah and the Messenger’ (Qur’ān 4:59).

Shāfi‘ī said: ‘I heard someone whom I am pleased with from the people of knowledge of the Qur’ān say: “‘The wisdom’ is the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.” We have narrated this from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Qatādah and Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr.

Shāfi‘ī said about His saying ‘If you dispute about anything’: ‘If you differ about anything, then refer to Allah and the Messenger, meaning—and Allah is most knowledgeable—to what Allah and the Messenger said.’ We narrate from Maymūn ibn Mahrān that he said about this verse: ‘*Referring to Allah* is referring to His Book, and *referring to the Messenger* after his death is referring to his Sunnah.’

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ addressed the people during the Farewell Hajj and said: ‘Verily Satan has despaired from being worshipped in your land. However, he is pleased with being obeyed regarding your deeds that you consider petty aside from that, so be careful. O people! Indeed I have left you that which if you adhere to it, you will never go astray: Allah’s Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet. Indeed every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim; and the Muslims are brothers. The wealth of a person’s brother is not allowed except for what he gives him from the goodness of his

self. Do not oppress, and do not turn back to disbelievers after me by striking each other's necks.' (Bazzār)

On the authority of Abū Rafīʿ:

The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Do not let me find one of you reclining on his couch saying when a command from my affair that I have ordered or forbade comes to him: "I do not know—whatever we find in Allah's Book, we follow."' (Abū Dāwūd)

On the authority of ʿĀʾishah: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Whoever innovates in our affair what is not of it, it is rejected"' (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Jābir ibn ʿAbdullāh:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to praise Allah in his sermon, exalt Him with what He is worthy of, and then say: 'Whomever Allah guides has none to misguide him. Whomever He misguides has none to guide him. The truest speech is Allah's Book, and the best guidance is Muḥammad's guidance. The worst of all things is novelties; every novelty is an innovation, every innovation is error, and every error is in the Fire.' (Muslim)

On the authority of al-ʿArbāḍ ibn Sāriyah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed the dawn prayer with us, then faced us and admonished us with an admonition from which the hearts trembled and the eyes shed tears. We said: 'O Messenger of Allah! It is as if this is an admonition of farewell, so advise us!' He said: 'I advise you to be mindful of Allah ﷻ, and to hear and obey even if a slave is over you. For, indeed, whoever among you lives long will see much disagreement. So it is upon you to follow my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Right-Guiding and Rightly-Guided Caliphs (*Sunnah al-khulafāʾ al-rāshidīn waʾl-muhtadiyyīn*). Cling to it with your molars, and beware of novel affairs, for indeed every innovation is an error.' (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Whoever calls to guidance has a reward like the rewards of whoever follows him, and that will not detract anything from their rewards. Whoever calls to error has a sin like the sins of whoever follows him, and that will not detract anything from their sins.' (Muslim)

On the authority of Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Whoever enacts a good *sunnah* in Islam has its reward and the reward of whoever does it, without detracting anything from their rewards. Whoever enacts a bad *sunnah* in Islam bears its burden and the burdens of whoever does it, without detracting anything from their burdens.’ (Muslim)¹

On the authority of Kathīr ibn ‘Abdullāh, from his father [‘Amr], from his grandfather [‘Awf]:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Whoever after me revives a sunnah from my Sunnah that has died has the reward of whoever among the people does it, and that does not detract anything from the people’s rewards. Whoever innovates an innovation that Allah and His Messenger are not pleased with has the sin of whoever among the people does it, and that does not detract anything from the people’s sins.’ (Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah)

Abū Dharr said: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded us not to tire of commanding the good, censuring the objectionable and teaching people the sunnahs.’

If following what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ enacted is necessary, and that necessity is an abiding obligation, then there is no way to follow his Sunnah except after knowing it. There is no way for us to know it except by accepting the truthful person’s report about it. Thus accepting the report is necessary in order to be able to follow him. For this reason, he commanded teaching the Sunnah and calling to it; and the enablement is through Allah.

‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd said:

Indeed the best speech is Allah’s Book, and the best guidance is Muḥammad’s guidance. The worst of all things is novelties. Indeed the sorrowful is he who was sorrowful in his mother’s belly, and the joyful is he who takes admonishment from another. So follow and do not innovate.’ (Bukhārī)

Abū ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān as-Sulamī narrated this in summary and said: “‘Abdullāh said: “So follow and do not innovate, for you have been sufficed.””

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The Jews split into 71 sects, and likewise the Christians. My community will split into 73 sects”’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad). This meaning has been narrated in the hadith of Mu‘āwiyah and other than him.

We have mentioned in *Kitāb al-Madkhal* and elsewhere that ‘blameworthy disagreement’ (*al-khilāf al-madhmūm*) is what is contrary to the Book, a sound sunnah, scholarly consensus, or whatever has the meaning of one of these. That is like the disagreement of whoever disagrees with the People of the Sunnah regarding what we have demonstrated in this book. Allah ﷻ said:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ

‘Do not be like those who split and disagreed after the clear proofs came to them’
(Qur’ān 3:105).

The Book, then the Sunnah, then scholarly consensus of the Companions have come with what we established concerning Allah’s attributes ﷻ, the beatific vision, His Prophet’s intercession and other than that. So whoever denies and disagrees in this regard, then that is a disagreement after the coming of clear proof (*majī’ al-bayyinah*). The rejection of whoever rejects what is related in the established Sunnah (*as-Sunnah ath-thābitah*) is ignorance of his obligation to follow whatever reaches him from it. The [false] interpretation of whoever interprets what is related in the Book is not permissible in the shariah, for there is no justification for discarding the prima facie connotation unless with an equal or stronger evidence. May Allah protect us through His mercy [from false interpretation]!

It is likely that the disagreement of these people and their ilk was intended in what we narrate from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah. Furthermore, Mu‘āwiyah’s narration of this hadith supports this [understanding]: ‘all of them are in the Fire except one, which is the Group.’

In the hadith of ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf there is the wording ‘except one, which is Islam and their group’. In the hadith of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr there is the wording ‘except one, which is what my Companions and I are upon today’.

His Companions unanimously agreed on fundamental issues (*masā’il al-uṣūl*), for disagreement about what we demonstrated in this book has not been related from a single one of them. As for derivative issues (*masā’il al-furū’*), then so long as there is no unequivocal text from the Book or the Sunnah, they have agreed about some and disagreed about some. Nonetheless, it is not allowed for anyone to disagree about what they have agreed upon. As for what they disagreed about, then the author of the shariah is He who permitted them to have this type of disagreement, wherein He commanded them to extract [what they considered to be the correct position] by scholarly exertion (*ijtihād*) while knowing that ambiguity is subject to different views.

Then He has given the one with the correct view two rewards, and the one with the wrong view one reward (due to the presumptive nature of scholarly exertion), and has pardoned him for whatever he was wrong about. On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “When a judge judges, having exerted himself and is correct, he has two rewards. If he exerts himself yet is wrong, he has one reward”’ (Tirmidhī and Nasā’ī).

This type of disagreement is not what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ rebuked in what we narrated. Shāfi'ī رحمه الله used to consider those who disagree from this perspective to be in agreement insofar as each one of them carried out the exertion that he was burdened with and did not contravene an unequivocal text of the Book, an established Sunnah that reached him, a matter of scholarly consensus or a sound analogy.

[In the case of a mistaken judgement by a qualified jurist], he only examined an analogy, and it led him to a conclusion that his peer did not come to. This is just as certain stars lead to a house from a certain direction, yet others lead to a place his peer did not go. So, each one of them obviously fulfills what he has been burdened with; and no sin is on him insofar as the correct interpretation, the sound Sunnah, or sound analogy is absent from him or he is mistaken, for he is not burdened with knowing the Unseen. Therefore all the jurists of the major cities who tread the path of the Companions and the Followers in regards to what they agreed upon and differed about are like a single sect. This is the Saved Sect (*al-firqah an-nājiyah*) that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ alluded to. Each one of them legitimately took his opinion from the Book, the Sunnah or scholarly consensus; and the enablement is through Allah.

As for other than them from the people of innovation being in the Fire eternally, then that is based on excommunicating them. So, whomever we do not excommunicate exits the Fire through having basic faith in the same manner as sinful Muslims, and the report is interpreted to mean that they are punished in the Fire for a period of time that is less than eternity. His ﷺ saying 'my community will split' is adduced to leave off excommunicating them, as he included all of them as part of his community despite their sectarianism; and Allah is most knowledgeable.

1 'Abdullāh Maḥfūz Bā'alawī uses this hadith as the basis for the following assertion: '*Sunna*, in both the language of the Arabs and the Sacred Law, means *way*.' See Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri, *Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*, trans. Nuh Ha Mim Keller (Evanston, IL: Sunna Books, 1994, revised edition), 908. Edward William Lane, in his *Arabic-English Lexicon*, under *s-n-n*, defines *sunnah* as 'A way, course, rule, mode, or manner, of acting or life or the like.' The *Lexicon* was accessed online at ejtaal.net/aa/ on 9 May 2016. Ed.

CHAPTER 25

THE PROHIBITION OF ASSOCIATING WITH THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Do not associate or converse with people who deny predetermination”’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad).

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: “The Qadariyyah are the Zoroastrians of this community. If they are sick do not visit them, and if they die do not attend their funerals”’ (Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad). This is narrated from another direction by Ibn ‘Umar. Ḥudhayfah, Jābir and Abū Hurayrah also narrate it.

They are called Qadariyyah because they establish predetermination for themselves and negate it from Allah ﷻ. They negate from Him the creation of their actions and establish such for themselves. Thus by annexing some of the creation to Him they resemble the Zoroastrians in regards to their opinion of two fundamentals—light and darkness—and that good is from light’s action and bad is from the action of darkness.

On the authority of Mu‘adh ibn Jabal:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Allah did not send a prophet except that in his community were Qadariyyah and Murji’ah who muddled the affair of his community. Indeed Allah has cursed the Qadariyyah and the Murji’ah on the tongues of 70 prophets!’ (Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr*)

Suwayd ibn Sa‘īd also narrated this meaning from Shihāb ibn Kharāsh, from Muḥammad ibn Ziyād, from Abū Hurayrah, from the Prophet ﷺ.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Two groups from my Community have no portion of Islam: the Murji’ah and the Qadariyyah.”’ Abū ‘Umar [one of the narrators] said: ‘I asked Wakī‘ about the Murji’ah and he said: “Those who say that faith is mere profession”’ (Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah).

Abū Qilābah said: ‘Do not associate with people of desires, for verily I do not feel safe from them submerging you into their error or confusing you about some of what you know.’

Muṣ‘ab ibn Sa‘d said: ‘Do not associate with a heretic (*maftūn*), for he will not miss you with either one of two things: enticing you until you follow him or annoying you before you leave him.’

Shāfi‘ī said: ‘Debating about knowledge hardens the heart and promotes spite.’ He also said: ‘It is better for a slave to meet Allah having committed every sin other than polytheism than it is to meet Him having believed in any heresy (*bi shay’ min al-hawā*).’

CHAPTER 26

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RULER

‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād visited Ma‘qal ibn Yasār when he was terminally ill. Ma‘qal said to him:

I am going to tell you a hadith that, if I were not on my deathbed, I would not tell you. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘There is no ruler who undertakes the affair of governing the Muslims and does not strive for them nor sincerely advise them except that he does not enter Paradise with them.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Indeed each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock. The ruler who is over people is a shepherd and responsible for them. The husband is a shepherd over his household and responsible for them. A man’s wife is a shepherd over her husband’s home and her children, and she is responsible for them. A man’s slave is a shepherd over his master’s property and responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Umāmah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘I advise the caliph after me to be mindful of Allah, to honour the elderly among the Muslims and have mercy on the young, to dignify the scholar, to not beat them and thereby abase them, to not leave them alone and thereby excommunicate them, to not castrate them and thereby cut-off their children, and to not shut the door behind him and thereby leave the strong to eat the weak.’

This hadith is also mentioned by Shahr ibn Hawshab, and its meaning has been narrated in various reports that we have mentioned in places other than this book.

CHAPTER 27

OBEYING THE RULERS AND ADHERING TO THE GROUP

Allah ﷻ said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

‘O you who believe! Obey Allah, obey the Messenger, and obey those in authority among you’ (Qur’ān 4:59);

and

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا

Whoever opposes the Messenger after the guidance is clear to him and follows other than the path of the believers, We will leave him to what he took on and put him in Hell, and what a miserable destination that is! (Qur’ān 4:115)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allah, and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allah. Whoever obeys the ruler has obeyed me, and whoever disobeys the ruler has disobeyed me.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Listening and obeying is obligated upon the Muslim whether he likes it or dislikes it, so long as he is not commanded with an act of disobedience. If he is commanded with an act of disobedience, then there is to be no listening or obedience.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Umm Salamah, wife of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘There will be leaders over you that you will rebuke for what you know of them. Whoever rebukes (the narrators al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd and Hishām ibn Ḥassān said ‘with his tongue’) is innocent, and whoever hates in his heart is secure. However, whoever is pleased and follows [will be

taken to task].’ It was said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Should we not kill them?’ One of the narrators, Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd, said: ‘Should we not fight them?’ He said: ‘No, as long as they pray.’ (Muslim)

In the narration of Ḥammād ibn Zayd, he said: ‘Whoever rebukes is innocent, and whoever hates is secure.’ Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: ‘Whoever rebukes with his tongue is innocent, and that time has gone; now is the time for hating in the heart.’ Qatādah narrates this from Ḥasan and said: ‘Meaning, whoever rebukes in his heart and hates in his heart.’

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘There is no prophet whom Allah sent to a community before me except that he had disciples and companions from his community that adhered to his Sunnah and followed it; and then people come after them who say what they do not do and do what they did not command. Whoever strives against them with his hand is a believer, whoever strives against them with his tongue is a believer, and whoever strives against them with his heart is a believer. There is no faith beyond that but a mustard seed.’ (Muslim)

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: “Whoever sees anything he dislikes from a ruler, let him be patient, for no one separates from the Group a handspan except that he dies a death of Jāhiliyyah”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Zayd ibn Thābit:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘Allah illumines the person who hears a statement of mine, memorizes it and conveys it to another. Perhaps the carrier of understanding does not understand, or perhaps he understands yet carries it to someone with more understanding. There are three things for which the heart of the believer is never bitter: making works purely for the sake of Allah; sincerely advising those in authority; and adhering to the Group, for indeed their call encompasses whoever is behind them.’ (Abū Dāwūd Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

CHAPTER 28

A SUMMARY OF VARIOUS OBLIGATIONS

Allah ﷻ said:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ

‘Establish the prayer and give zakat’ (Qur’ān 2:110);

فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ

‘Whomever among you witnesses the month [of Ramadan] must fast’ (Qur’ān 2:185);

and

وَاتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ

‘Complete the hajj and the umrah for Allah’ (Qur’ān 2:196).

In other verses He connected it with ability, which is adulthood, provision, transport and travel safety. He commanded jihad and encouraged it, so that the collective obligation is fulfilled, in a number of verses in His Book, and prohibited vile acts, interest, murder, oppression and cutting-off family in a number of places.

Ibn ‘Umar said: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “Islam is built on five things: testifying that there is no god but Allah, establishing the prayer, giving zakat, [making] the hajj, and fasting Ramadan”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

Ibn al-Khaṣāṣiyah said:

I went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to pledge allegiance to him and Islam, so he stipulated that ‘You testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger, pray five times daily, fast Ramadan, give zakat, make the hajj to the House and struggle in Allah’s path.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! There are two things that I cannot do! One is zakat—I have nothing but ten animals used for riding and running errands. The other is jihad—people say that whoever turns away has woken with Allah’s wrath. I am afraid that if I attend a battle I will dislike it and give preference to myself.’ The Messenger of Allah took my hand, moved it and said: ‘No

giving, and no jihad! So what will you enter Paradise with?' Then I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! I pledge to you to do all of them.' (Aḥmad)

On the authority of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī:

Once a man said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Inform me of a deed that will put me in Paradise.' The people said: 'What is with him?' The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Leave him! Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him, establish the prayer, give zakat and maintain family ties.' It is as if the man was on his riding animal.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of 'Abdullāh [ibn Mas'ūd]:

I asked the Prophet ﷺ: 'Which deed is most beloved to Allah?' He said: 'The prayer in its time.' I said: 'Then what?' He said: 'Filial piety.' I said: 'Then what?' He said: 'Jihad in Allah's path.' He told this to me, and if I had sought more he would have said more. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about the major sins. He said: "Ascribing partners to Allah, disrespecting parents, murder and false testimony" or "making a false statement"' (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Avoid seven destructive sins .' It was said: 'O Messenger of Allah! What are they?' He said: 'Ascribing partners to Allah, sorcery, murdering a soul that Allah has made inviolable (except by right), consuming interest, consuming an orphan's wealth, turning away from battle and accusing chaste, innocent believing women of fornication.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'The thief is not a believer while he steals, the fornicator is not a believer while he fornicates, and the drinker is not a believer while he drinks. By He in whose hand is Muḥammad's soul, none of you is a believer while he seizes a prized spoil that the believers look to possess, and none of you is a believer while he cheats. So beware! Beware!' (Muslim)

He meant—and Allah is most knowledgeable—that these actions are not from the actions of he who is a believer with complete faith. Zuhri used to say: 'The saying is from Allah, conveyance is on the Messenger and submission is on us.' He also said: 'They used to relate the hadiths from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as they emerged out of reverence for Allah's sanctity, and they did not count sins as polytheism or disbelief.'

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in the Farewell Hajj: ‘Which month do you know to have the greatest sanctity?’ The Companions said: ‘This month of ours.’ He said: ‘Which country do you know to have the greatest sanctity?’ They said: ‘This country of ours.’ He said: ‘Do you know what day is the greatest?’ They said: ‘This day of ours.’ He said: ‘Verily Allah ﷻ has sanctified your blood, your wealth and your honour except by right, like the sanctity of this day of yours in this country of yours. Have I not conveyed?’ He asked [the latter questions] three times, and each time they answered: ‘Yes, indeed.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Tamīm ad-Dārī: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The religion is sincerity, the religion is sincerity, the religion is sincerity—to Allah and His Book, to His Prophet, and to the leaders and general Muslims”’ (Muslim).

On the authority of Abū Umayyah ash-Sha‘bānī:

I went to Abū Tha‘labah al-Khashanī and said: ‘What do you make of this verse?’ He said: ‘Which verse?’ I said: ‘His saying: “O you who believe! You have charge of your own selves. He who goes astray will not harm you if you are guided” (Qur’ān 5:105).’ He said: ‘By Allah, I have asked one well informed about it. I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said: “Command the good and forbid the objectionable until you see stinginess obeyed, desire followed, material things having effect, each person being impressed by his own opinion, and an affair that is out of your hands—then you have charge of your own selves. Leave the affair of the general people alone, for verily there are days that will come after you in which patience is like holding on to a hot coal, and the practising Muslim has the reward of 50 men doing the same deed.”’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah)

As for the derivative obligations (*furū‘ al-farā’id*) that the slaves regularly practice, special rulings and other than them for which there is no unambiguous text from the Book and no unambiguous text from the Sunnah for most of them (even if there is something about it from the Sunnah), then they are among the reports dealt with by specialists. Shāfi‘ī said about any text that is open to interpretation and may be used as a basis for analogy: ‘This is a level of knowledge that laypeople (*‘āmmah*) do not reach. If there is among them a sufficient number of people specializing [in the religious sciences], then there is no harm—if Allah ﷻ wills—if others leave it.’

He adduced for this opinion His ﷻ saying: ‘It is not for the believers to go out altogether. Let a few from every group stay behind in order to learn the religion in-depth and warn their people when they return to them so that they may take heed’

(Qur'ān 9:122). Other examples of collective obligations are jihad in Allah's path, the funeral prayer and burial of the dead, and returning the greeting of peace.

If the slave knows how Allah is to be worshipped, then it is upon him to conform to the command in regards to what he worships Him with, so that he is obedient and compliant to the command. Allah ﷻ said:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

'They were not commanded except to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him' (Qur'ān 98:5).

On the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'Deeds are only by intentions, and a person has only what he intended. So whoever's migration was for Allah and His Messenger, then his migration was for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever's migration was to attain some material thing or to marry a woman, then his migration was for whatever he migrated for.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

CHAPTER 29

THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD ﷺ

He is Abū 'l-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim ibn 'Abd Manaf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb ibn Murrah ibn Ka'b. Allah named him ﷺ Muḥammad, Aḥmad and other names that we have mentioned in the book *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwah*.

The indications of prophethood are many, and the reports about the appearance of miracles (*mu'jizāt*) are clear. Though individually not mass transmitted (*aḥad*), these reports are considered as a whole to be mass transmitted (*mutawātir*) and well known, for each one shares in a wondrous affair that breaks the law of nature.


This is one way of mass transmission by which proof is established and any excuse is cut-off. We have gathered them in a book of 50 parts, along with a clarification of the states of the miracle worker in his life ﷺ. Here we will point out, if Allah wills, some of his miracles and indications of his prophethood in a manner fit for this book.

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Salām:

Indeed we find the description of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'Verily We sent you as a witness, a bearer of good news, a warner and a protection for the unlettered people. You are My slave and My messenger whom I have named Mutawakkil.¹ He is not rough, he is not harsh, he is not loud in the markets, he does not return a bad deed with its like, rather he pardons and lets go. I will not take him until he straightens out crooked religion by testifying that there is no god but Allah, thereby opening blind eyes, deaf ears and closed hearts.' (Bukhārī)

'Atā' ibn Yasār said: 'Laythī informed me that he heard Ka'b the rabbi say the same thing that 'Abdullāh ibn Salām said.' So, these are two scholars from the People of the Book who bore witness to some of Muḥammad's ﷺ descriptions that they found in their books. This narration of theirs has supporting narrations that we have mentioned in *Dalā'il [an-Nubuwwah]*.

We narrate from Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl that he went out in search of the true religion, until he came upon an old man in the Peninsula and informed him about why he came out. The old man said to him: 'Who are you from?' He said: 'From the people of Allah's House.' He said: 'A prophet has appeared in your country, or he is present and his star has risen, so go back, affirm him and believe in him.' We have narrated this same meaning in the hadith of Salmān al-Fārisī and others (Aḥmad).

Among the indications of his prophethood are the wondrous affairs that happened before his birth and his launching  of amazing measures that undermined the authority of the nations of disbelief and degraded their word, that supported the affair of the Arabs and acclaimed their mention—like the affair of the elephant and the punishment and warning that Allah unleashed on its party. Among them is the extinguishing of the Zoroastrian's fire, the tumbling of the columns in the colonnade of Khosrow, the diminishing of the water of Sāwah, the vision of Mūbadhān and other than these.

Among them are the loud exclamations of his descriptions and qualities that people heard and the implicit symbols clarifying his affair. Among them is the turning over of worshipped idols and them falling on their faces without any apparent reason, and everything else that has been related and transmitted from famous reports about the appearance of wondrous things at his birth and early childhood until he was sent as a prophet and afterwards. They are mentioned in *Dalā'il an-Nubuwwah* one after another.

Shaykh Abū Sulaymān al-Khaṭṭābī  said in what I read from his book:

Among the indications of his prophethood is that at the beginning of his affair he was a poor, needy and weak orphan. He had no wealth to influence people with, no power to overcome men with, no royal heritage that he aspired to reinstitute, and no helpers or supporters to implement the vision he manifested and the religion he invited to. He emerged in this condition before the Arabs in their entirety, and all peoples and tribes—alone, dejected, avoided and despised—and they were in agreement on worshipping idols and venerating divination; upholding the worship of Jāhiliyyah with chauvinism, bigotry, mutual enmity and oppression, bloodshed, raiding and permitting the prohibited. No religion united them, no leader's call prevented them and no obedience to a king stopped them. Considering the final outcome did not halt them from their foul actions, and neither did fear of any punishment or blame. Then he united their hearts and their word, until their beliefs were in agreement, hearts mutually supportive, hands were joined, and they became a single force aiding him to victory and a single body under his obedience. So they left their countries and homelands, turned away from their people and clans out of love for him, threw away idols, and abandoned fornication (despite it being dictated by their desires), drinking wine (despite it agreeing with their taste), and interest (despite it being the bulk of their wealth). They spent their lives and their souls to support him, and exposed themselves to death in order to uplift his word—without any material gain or immediate gratification, be it wealth, power or otherwise. Rather, he made dominion equal between them—whether rich or poor—and the noble person take the humble person's example. Do the likes of these things agree or coincidentally come together for

someone who is this way via rational choice or thoughtful planning, or through strenuous effort or coincidence? No! By He who sent him with the truth and subjected these affairs to him, no rational person doubts anything of that. It is nothing but a divine affair, and a thing of heavenly dominance that breaks natural law. Human ability is incapable of attaining it, and no one is able to do it except He who possesses the creation and the command—blessed is Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

He has composed a summation of what we have mentioned in this section in His saying ﷻ:

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

‘And He joined between their hearts. If you had paid all that is in the earth you would not have joined between their hearts. Rather, Allah joined between them. Indeed He is Almighty and Wise’ (Qur’ān 8:63).

Among the indications of his prophethood ﷺ is that he was an unlettered man. He did not write with his hand nor did he read. He was born to an unlettered people and raised among them in a country with no historian aware of the news of previous generations, no astronomer practising the science of celestial bodies, no engineer knowledgeable of construction, no philosopher investigating nature, and no theologian guiding to proper argumentation and the various aspects of debate or how to infer the absent from the present. He never travelled to learn from a scholar by staying with him to acquire knowledge. All of this was known to the people of his country, and very well known to those intimately familiar with his affair. The knowledgeable, the ignorant, the general and the special among them all knew him. He came to them with the news of the Torah, the Gospel and past nations when the original traces of these books had faded away and been distorted, and none remained from those who adhered to them and knew the correct from the false except a few.

Furthermore, he argued against every faction from the people of opposing religions with what no expert theologian or skilled apologist could even begin to refute. This is among the clearest indications that the affair that he came with is from Allah ﷻ. This is the meaning of Allah’s ﷻ saying:

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَىٰ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

'Is it not enough that We revealed the Book to you, which is recited to them? There is certainly mercy and a reminder in that for a believing people' (Qur'ān 29:51).

There is also an allusion in the verse to what we mentioned about his state and described about his affair in regards to the fact that he was unlettered and neither read nor wrote, and was not known for studying books and seeking reports. It is only something Allah revealed to him, so he recited it to them, and that is enough to indicate the correctness of his affair and the truthfulness of his claim.

Among the indications of his prophethood and his truthfulness in regards to the great Qur'ān that he came with from Allah ﷻ is that he challenged all of the creation with the inimitability of the Qur'ān, and invited them to match it and come with a *sūrah* equal to it. Yet they refrained from doing so and were paralyzed from coming with anything equal to it.

The people of knowledge differ about the inimitability (*i'jāz*) of the Qur'ān. The first opinion is that its inimitability is from the perspective of its rhetoric (*balāghah*) and the beauty of its words, not its structure (*naẓm*). The second opinion is that its inimitability is from the perspective of its structure, not its words, for the Arabs certainly had spoken with its words. The third opinion is that the inimitability is contained in its reports about past episodes (*ḥawādith*); and its announcement of incidents (*kawā'in*) in the future, and their occurrence with the characteristics that it communicated about them. The fourth opinion is that its inimitability is Allah paralyzing (*ṣarfah*) people from coming with its like and diverting their endeavours from matching it, which serves as a sign of his prophethood and an indication of the truthfulness of his claim.

Some of the scholars are of the opinion that establishing the inimitability of the Qur'ān is from all of these perspectives. There is no meaning to the opinion of he who claims that there is no inimitability in its words [because the words were used in Arabic and widely circulated in Arab speech], as rhetoric is not in just individual words and terms without any consideration of the places and ways in which those words are used.²

As for its inimitability from the perspective of structure, then this refers to the structure of speech by which the Qur'ān is distinct from all other forms of speech the Arabs use. Indeed the Arabs use five types of speech: prose (which the Arabs use in regular dialogue), metered poetry, sermons, epistles and rhymed prose. Each category has a different structure. Now the structure of the Qur'ān's speech is distinct from these five modes of expression in a manner that is not hidden from any eloquent Arab who hears it (or any non-Arab who is well versed in Arabic). This is to the extent that if someone [with such proficiency] hears it, he immediately recognises its difference to all the aforementioned types of speech.

The proof (*hujjah*) is established against the Quraysh and all the rest of the Arabs through their awareness of this matter, and this difference between the Qurʾān and all other speech is the area of proof. Through this, the Qurʾān is an inimitable miracle to all creation, and is tantamount to the proofs that Allah sent His messengers with and adduced for people—like splitting the sea, raising the dead and preventing fire from burning. For this reason Allah ﷻ said:

وَإِنْ كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ

‘If you are in doubt about what we have revealed to Our slave, then come with a *sūrah* equal to it’

until He ﷻ said,

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

‘if you do not—and you will not—then fear the Fire whose fuel is people and stones, prepared for the disbelievers’ (Qurʾān 2:23).

Some of the scholars say that the speech that the Chosen One ﷻ related to the Arabs, which paralyzed them from coming with its like, is a more amazing sign and a clearer indication than raising the dead and healing the blind and the leper. It has gone before expert rhetoricians, eloquent speakers, preeminent orators and people highly skilled in the language with speech whose meaning was understood to them. So, their incapacity is more amazing than the incapacity of those who witnessed the Messiah raise the dead and heal the blind and the leper, because they had no feasible aspiration to do so and did not practise its science. Yet the Quraysh practised eloquent speech, rhetoric and public speaking, so this indicates that the incapacity to match the Qurʾān is in order for it to be a sign for his message and the correctness of his prophethood. This is a decisive proof and clear evidence.

Question: ‘Verily the way in which the distinctiveness of the Qurʾān from all other Arabic speech appears is through the recurrent rhymed prose at the end of sentences and verses, and rhymed prose (*sajʿ*) in Arabic is abundant—not non-existent or strange—so how can you make that a sign of its inimitable nature?’ Reply: None of that is rhymed prose, rather it is only separating between sentences or verses with similar sounds in order to improve the conveyance of meaning, which is a rhetorical device, whereas mere rhyme is a fault. This is because end rhyme in the Qurʾān follows

meaning, whereas meaning follows rhyme in rhymed prose. Also rhymed prose is forced, and consists of nothing more than arranging the endings of speech in some uniform style. Whoever compares end rhyme in the Qurʾān (which follows the import of meaningful speech and articulate expression) with rhymed prose (which is devoid of any connected meaning and forced due to stylistic constraints) is incorrect, and has made an erroneous analogy.

As for he who holds the position that its inimitability is because of its containing fulfilled prophecy, then this perspective is clear and has manifold supporting narrations, like His ﷺ saying:

الم، غَلِبَتِ الرُّومُ، فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ غَلِبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ

‘Alif. Lām. Mīm. Rome has been defeated in the closest land, and they will overcome after this defeat’ (Qurʾān 30:1–3).

The matter was as the Qurʾān said. [Initially], Persia overcame Rome, and the Muslims were saddened by it while the polytheists were happy. So Allah promised the Muslims that Rome would defeat Persia in a few years. Rome then defeated Persia in nine years (and it is said in seven), and the believers rejoiced at Allah giving victory to the People of the Book.

In addition, He ﷺ said:

وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ
وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُحَقِّقَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ

‘When Allah promised you that one of the two groups is for you, and you wished that the unarmed one would be for you; however, Allah willed to manifest the truth with His words and subvert the disbelievers’ (Qurʾān 8:7).

The matter of obtaining one of the two groups was as He promised, in that the polytheists who left Makkah for Badr were beaten, and Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb fled to the caravan.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was finished with those killed at Badr, it was said to him: ‘You must take the caravan, for there is nothing other than it.’ ‘Abbās called him while in chains: ‘It is not for you.’ He said: ‘Why not?’ He said: ‘Because Allah promised you one of the two groups, and has already implemented what He promised.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

When he and the polytheists met at Badr, he said: ‘O Allah! I implore You by Your covenant and Your promise! O Allah! If You will, You may not be worshipped after today!’ So Abū Bakr took his hand and said: ‘It is alright, O Messenger of Allah! It is alright! You have already beseeched your Lord,’ and he was in his armour. So he went out from his cupola saying:

‘The group will be vanquished and turn their backs. Rather, the Hour is their appointment, and the Hour is even more catastrophic and difficult’ (Qur’ān 54:45–46).

He recited what had been revealed of Allah’s ﷻ informing him that the polytheists would be vanquished, and the matter was as He informed.

He ﷻ said:

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ لَتَدْخُلَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ
مُحَلِّقِينَ رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ لَا تَخَافُونَ فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ
فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا

‘Allah has made true for His Messenger the vision in reality—you will most definitely enter the Sacred Mosque securely, if Allah wills, shaving or shortening your hair, and without fear. He knew what you did not know, and made a close victory besides that’ (Qur’ān 48:27).

They entered the Sacred Mosque while making-up the umrah according to the description that the verse spoke of, and the ‘close victory’ that Allah promised in the *sūrah*, the victory at Khaybar (and it is said the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah), happened.

He said:

فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا، وَمَغَانِمَ كَثِيرَةً يَأْخُذُونَهَا

‘He sent down tranquility on them and rewarded them with a close victory and many spoils for them to take’ (Qur’ān 48:18–19).

It is said that this is about the victory at Khaybar.

وَأُخْرَى لَمْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهَا

‘And others that you were not capable of’ (Qur’ān 48:21).



It is said that this is about what they acquired thereafter.

لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

‘So that He may manifest it over every other religion, even if the polytheists despise it’ (Qur’ān 9:33).

This manifestation and dominance has occurred, and praise is to Allah.

Shāfi‘ī  said:

Allah has manifested His religion, which He sent His Messenger  with, over all other religions by making clear to whosoever hears it that it is the truth, and that whatever differs with it from other religions is false. He manifested it through the fact that all of polytheism consists of two religions: the People of the Book and the religion of unlettered people. The Messenger of Allah overcame the unlettered people until they accepted Islam, willfully or by force; and killed and captured some of the People of the Book until some accepted Islam, and some humbly paid *jizyah*³ and applied his rule . This is the ‘manifest[ing] over every other religion’.

Allah  said:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ
مِّنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ

Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among you that He will give them authority on the earth like He gave authority to those before them, and He will establish their religion, which He is pleased with, for them; and replace their fear with security. They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. Whoever is ungrateful after that, then those are the sinful ones. (Qur’ān 24:55)

[So in this verse] He promised them while they were in a state of fear and hardship, and the dominance of disbelievers [was prevalent], that they would overcome and inherit authority on the earth, and that He would establish their religious affairs, which He is pleased with, for them and replace fear with security. He did everything that He promised through the Prophet and his Companions and followers. Therein is an indication of the correctness of his prophethood and the truthfulness of his claim—may Allah bless him and give him peace along with his family.

On the authority of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b:

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions arrived in Madinah and the Helpers aided them all, the Arabs shot at them as a single bow. They neither slept nor woke up in the morning except with their weapons. They said: ‘You will see that we will live until we sleep securely and tranquilly, not fearing anyone except Allah.’ So this verse was revealed: ‘Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among you that He will give them authority on the earth like He gave authority to those before them, and He will establish their religion, which He is pleased with, for them; and replace their fear with security. They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. Whoever is ungrateful after that, then those are the sinful ones.’ (Hākim)

[As for] His ﷺ saying,

الَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنُبَوِّتَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلَا جَزَاءَ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ، الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

‘Those who immigrated for Allah’s sake after they had been oppressed, We will accommodate well in the world, and the reward of the Afterlife is even greater, if they only knew; those who were patient and relied upon their Lord’ (Qur’ān 16:41–42),

[then it] has the same meaning. Some of exegetes propose that this verse was revealed about those who were tortured in Makkah, until they immigrated after having been oppressed, whereby Allah promised to accommodate them well in the world, i.e. extensive provision, and He gave them that. It is narrated that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه used to say whenever he gave a gift to one of the Immigrants: ‘Take this, and may Allah bless you in it. This is what Allah promised you in the world, and what He has in store for you in the Afterlife is even better.’

When Abū Lahab refused Islam and said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ what he said, Allah ﷻ revealed about him:

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ، مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ، سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ

‘Cursed are the hands of Abū Lahab, and cursed is he! Neither his wealth nor his earnings will suffice him. He will enter a flaming fire’ (Qur’ān 111:1–3).

Abū Lahab died upon polytheism, and will enter the Fire due to his disbelief. This was revealed while Abū Lahab was alive, and he was unable, despite his avidness for denying the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, to refute his word by pronouncing Islam in order to cause doubt in people about the Prophet ﷺ and what he informed them concerning his

affair. It is not possible for these matters to occur coincidentally and consistently turn out true without anything ever differing. It is but from Allah, Knower of the Unseen.

As for diversion and paralysis with regards to their hypothetical ability to come with its like, then that is known by the non-existence of any equal despite the plethora of motives and desperate need for it [on the behalf of the disbelievers]. It is not possible for any rational person to doubt that if they were able to do so, they would have rushed to do it, considering their avidness for refuting his claim and nullifying his word. Yet in regards to his matter they resorted to fighting, the risking of lives and destruction of property, and separation from family and home—while matching the Qurʾān would have been easier for them than undertaking these perils and going through these extreme situations and troubles. Since they never matched the Qurʾān, it indicates their incapacity to do so. This is analogous to a perfectly sane man suffering from extreme thirst in the presence of water, to the point that he writhes from severe dehydration, yet does not drink the water. No one can doubt that either he is incapable of drinking the water or prevented from it due to something stopping him, and that he does not leave the water by choice while having ample motive and desperate need for it. This is clear, and all praise is due to Allah.

Among the indications of his truthfulness is that he was considered highly intelligent by the people of his time, and he asserted decisively through what His Lord ﷻ informed him of—that they would not come with the like of what he challenged them with. He said:

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَكِنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا

‘If you do not—and you will not’ (Qurʾān 2:24).

If it were not for his knowledge that that was from the Knower of the Unseen, and nothing happens to contradict what He informs of, his reason would not have permitted him to assert decisively that a thing will not be while it is possible to be.

We have narrated in *Dalāʾil [an-Nubuwwah]* some of the reports that are related about the Prophet ﷺ reciting some of what was revealed to him to the polytheists who were among the people of eloquence and rhetoric, and their conceding its inimitability, which unveil a summation of what we have alluded to. We will mention some of them in brief here.

On the authority of Muḥammad ibn Kaʿb:

One day ʿUtbah ibn Rabīʿah was sitting in the clubhouse of the Quraysh, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting by himself at the Kaʿbah. ʿUtbah said: ‘O Quraysh! Shall I not go to this man and talk to him, and propose some matters that maybe he

will accept and leave us alone?’ They said: ‘Of course, O Abū ‘l-Walid!’ So ‘Utbah went and sat next to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and proposed to him wealth, possessions and other than that. When ‘Utbah was finished the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Are you done, Abū ‘l-Walid?’ He said yes. He said: ‘Then listen to me.’ He said: ‘I’m listening.’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. *Hā’ Mīm*. A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful; a Book whose verses are clear—an Arabic recitation for a people who know’ (Qur’ān 41:1–3). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ continued reciting to him. When ‘Utbah heard this, he remained silent and put his hands behind his back to recline on them and listen. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ recited until the verse of prostration, prostrated and then said: ‘Did you hear, Abū ‘l-Walid?’ He said: ‘I heard.’ He said: ‘That is all I have to say to you.’ So ‘Utbah went back to his companions, and some of them said to others: ‘We swear by Allah, Abū ‘l-Walid has come to you with a face different from the face with which he left you.’ When he sat with them they said: ‘What is with you, Abū ‘l-Walid?’ He said: ‘By Allah, I heard a saying that I have never heard the like of. By Allah, it is not poetry, it is not magic, and it is not soothsaying. O Quraysh! Obey me and leave things to me. Leave this man and what he is about alone, for by Allah, there will be something serious for his saying which I heard.’

We also narrate this hadith from Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh with the addition of ‘Utbah saying to his companions:

He responded to me with something that, by Allah, is not magic, poetry or soothsaying. He recited: ‘In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. *Hā’ Mīm*’ until he reached ‘Say: I warn you of a bolt like the bolt of ‘Ād and Thamūd’ (Qur’ān 41:13). So I held his mouth and implored him for the sake of family to stop. You already know that when Muḥammad says something, he does not lie, so I feared for you that a punishment would be unleashed.

We narrate on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās concerning the story of al-Walid ibn al-Mughīrah that he said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: ‘Recite to me.’ So he recited to him:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ
وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُم لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

‘Verily Allah commands justice, goodness and giving to relatives, and forbids vile sins, the objectionable and oppression. He admonishes you so that you may remember’ (Qur’ān 16:90).

Walīd said: ‘Again.’ So the Prophet ﷺ repeated. Walīd said: ‘By Allah, it is sweet. Indeed there is elegance in it, its high bears fruit, and its low is a plentiful spring, and no human being says this.’ He said to his people:

By Allah, no man among you is more knowledgeable of poetry than me, nor its meter and odes, nor the poetry of jinn. By Allah, what he says does not resemble any of that. By Allah, what he says is sweet. Indeed there is elegance in it, its high bears fruit and its low is a plentiful spring. Indeed it surpasses and is not surpassed; it obliterates whatever is beneath it.

We narrate the hadith of Umm Salamah about the story of Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭālib’s entering the court of the Negus and his saying to him: ‘Allah sent a messenger to us. We know his lineage, truthfulness and chastity. He recited to us a revelation which does not resemble anything else’ (Aḥmad and Abū Dāwūd).

The sound, famous reports related from numerous paths about the miracles of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are many. They are recorded in *Dalā’il an-Nubuwwah*, and knowledge of them will be attained by anyone who reads about them and studies them well. What we mention below is only a portion of his miraculous signs, and is sufficient for whoever does not attain knowledge of them all.

On the authority of Anas ibn Malik: ‘The people of Makkah asked Allah’s Prophet ﷺ to show them a sign, so he showed them the splitting of the moon twice’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd:

The moon split over Makkah, and its people became two factions. The disbelievers of Makkah said: ‘This is magic that the son of Abū Kabshah bewitched you with. Ask the travellers. If they saw what you saw, then believe; and if they did not see what you saw, then it is magic that he has bewitched you with.’ So the travellers were asked and approached from every side. They said: ‘We saw.’

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to preach on a stump. When he moved to the pulpit the stump moaned, so he comforted it’ (Tirmidhī). Abū Ḥaṣḥ ibn al-‘Alā’, brother of Abū ‘Amr ibn al-‘Alā’, mentioned the same report with the same chain, but said: ‘So the Prophet ﷺ went to it and stroked it, so it became quiet.’

On the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh:

The mosque in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had a roof constructed from palm tree stumps. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to stand next to a stump when he preached. When the pulpit was made he stood on it, and we heard a voice from the

stump like the voice of a moaning animal, until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went to it and placed his hand on it, and then it was quiet.’ (Bukhārī)

In another version also related from Jābir: ‘So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went down and embraced it. It was whimpering like the moans of a child. It was crying because of what it heard from the Remembrance spoken over it’ (Bukhārī).

In the hadith of Sahl ibn Sa‘d as-Sā‘idī: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Are you not amazed by the yearning of this wood?’ So the people faced it and were softened by its yearning, until their crying increased.’

In the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās from the Prophet ﷺ: ‘If I had not taken care of it, it would have moaned until the Day of Resurrection’ (Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

The same meaning of Ibn ‘Abbās’ saying is in the hadith of Anas ibn Mālīk from the Prophet ﷺ. In his hadith about this story, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat on the pulpit, the stump moaned like the moan of a bull until the mosque vibrated by its moaning.

In the hadith of Umm Salamah: ‘When the stump lost him, it moaned like a bull moans until the people of the mosque heard it.’ The affair of stumps yearning is among the clear matters and wondrous signs that the Khalaf took from the Salaf; thus narrating individual hadith about it is somewhat forced .

‘Amr ibn Sawād said:

Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله said to me: ‘Allah ﷻ did not give to any prophet what He gave to Muḥammad ﷺ.’ So I said: ‘He gave ‘Īsā ﷺ the raising of the dead.’ He said: ‘He gave Muḥammad ﷺ the stump that he used to preach next to until the pulpit was prepared for him. When it was prepared the stump yearned until a voice was heard from it, and this is greater than ‘Īsā’s miracle.’

On the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd:

You all consider signs (*āyāt*) to be a punishment, but we used to consider them a blessing in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. We used to eat with the Prophet ﷺ and we would hear the food glorifying Allah. Once the Prophet ﷺ was presented a container [with little water, so he put his hand in it]⁴ and made water pour from his fingers, saying: ‘Come to the blessed purity and abundance from the sky,’ until we all lustrated from it. (Bukhārī)

We narrate in the hadith of Abū Dharr that pebbles glorified Allah in the palm of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then Abū Bakr’s palm, then ‘Umar’s palm, then ‘Uthmān’s palm.

Sālim ibn Abī al-Ja‘d said:

I said to Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh: ‘How many were you on the Day of the Tree⁵?’ He said ‘1,500’ and mentioned that they were very thirsty. He said: ‘So water was bought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in a container and he put his hand in it. Water came out from between his fingers as if it was a spring. So we drank, and it was enough for all of us.’ I said: ‘How many were you?’ He said: ‘If we had been 100,000 it would have been enough for us. We were 1,500.’

‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Muslim narrated this from Ibn Fuḍayl from Ḥuṣayn with the addition: ‘So we drank and lustrated’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). In a narration from Jābir [it reads]: ‘So the people lustrated and drank. I spared no effort to retain what was in my belly, for I knew that it was a blessing’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

In some of the narrations from him:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Come to a blessing from Allah and lustrate.’ So the people lustrated and drank, and there was nothing more important to me than what was in my belly, due to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ statement [that it is] ‘a blessing from Allah.’ (Bukhārī)

In the narration of Ibn ‘Abbās he said: ‘I saw springs come forth from between his fingers, and he ordered Bilāl to call people to make a blessed lustration’ (Aḥmad). This incident was at another time, because Ibn ‘Abbās did not witness Ḥudaybiyyah. Anas ibn Malik also narrates that the Prophet ﷺ did this, and it is most likely that it was in Madīnah.

On the authority of Anas:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called for a container of water, so a wide bowl with a little water in it was brought to him. He put his fingers in it, and I saw the water coming from his fingers. I figured that there were 70 to 80 people who lustrated from it. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

In all of this is an indication that this was at another time from what Jābir and others narrated.

On the authority of Ziyād ibn al-Ḥārith aṣ-Ṣadā’ī:

I was with the Prophet ﷺ while he was travelling. So he went to relieve himself and then came back in my direction with his Companions close behind. He said: ‘Is there any water, O brother of Ṣadā’?’ I said: ‘None except a little that is not enough for us.’ The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Put it in a container and bring it to me.’ So I did it and he put his hand in the water. I saw water gushing from two of his fingers like a spring.’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

On the authority of al-Barā‘:

You all consider the victory of Makkah to a victory, and it was. However, we consider the true victory to be at the Allegiance of Pleasure. We were at the well of Ḥudaybiyyah and we found that people had emptied the well. This was mentioned to the Prophet ﷺ, so he called for a bucket from the well, sipped some water, spat it back in and prayed to Allah. Its water then increased until we and our riding animals could drink, and we were 114.’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions went out travelling and were afflicted with severe thirst. So two men (I think ‘Alī and Zubayr) stood up to find water. The Prophet said: ‘You will find in such-and-such a place a woman with a camel with two water skins, so bring her to me.’ So they came to the woman and found her riding a camel, sitting between two water skins. They said to her: ‘Respond to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ She said: ‘And who is the Messenger of Allah? This new man?’ They said: ‘He is the one you mean, and he is truly the Messenger of Allah.’ So they came with her, and the Prophet ﷺ put something in her water skins and said whatever Allah willed for him to say. It appeared to me that they increased in fullness.

So the Prophet ﷺ ordered for her cloth and spread it out, then summoned his Companions until they came and filled up her cloth. Then he said to her: ‘Go, for we did not take anything from your water. Rather, Allah gave us drink.’ So she went to her family and informed them. She said: ‘I have come to you from the most magical of people or indeed he is truly the Messenger of Allah.’ So the people of that area came, and all of them converted to Islam. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

This occurred because he ﷺ hoped for their Islam through him showing the woman a miracle and her informing them. They knew his truthfulness from this and therefore converted to Islam.

The hadith of the crock narrated by ‘Imrān and Abū Qatādah al-Anṣārī is of a similar kind [to the aforementioned]. Abū Qatādah said:

The Prophet ﷺ said to me: ‘Do you have any water?’ I said: ‘Yes, a crock that has a little water in it.’ So the people lustrated, and some water was left in the crock. The Prophet said: ‘Flourish with it, O Abū Qatādah, for indeed it will have some importance.’

When the midday heat intensified, the Companions said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Thirst has destroyed us!’ He said: ‘There is no destruction over you. O Abū Qatādah! Bring me the crock.’ So I came to him with it. He said: ‘Give me my cup.’ So they came

to him with it and he began pouring and giving people drinks. The Messenger of Allah said: 'Drink well to your fill, for verily all of you will be quenched.'

So the people drank until nobody but the Prophet and I remained. So he poured for me and said: 'Drink, O Abū Qatādah!' I said: 'You drink, O Messenger of Allah!' He replied: 'The one serving the drinks is the last to drink.' So I drank, then he drank after me, and there remained in the crock around the same amount that was in it before, and that day we were 300. (Muslim)

On the authority of Akwa':

We went on an excursion with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and were afflicted with extreme hunger, to the point that we considered slaughtering some of our riding animals. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Gather some of your preparations.' The Prophet ﷺ ordered for a leather mat and it was spread out. So people brought everything from their knapsacks and threw it out. So I exerted myself in trying to count exactly the amount and, lo and behold, it was like the flank of a sheep. We were 114, and all of us ate until we were satiated.

Then I tried counting again after the people were satiated, and again it was like the flank of a sheep. We packed our knapsacks with it, and then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came with a drop of water in a container. He poured it in his cup, and all of us used it for purification. Thereafter, eight groups came and said: 'Is there enough for lustration?' So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Complete the lustration.' (Muslim)

On the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh:

My father was martyred on the day of Uhud and left behind six daughters, and left me with a large debt. When palm clippings were available, I went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said: 'O Messenger of Allah! You already know that my father was martyred on the day of Uhud and that he left me with a large debt, so I would like for the creditors to see you.'

He said: 'Go and thresh every date one by one.' So I did that and then called him. When they looked at him, they coveted that moment. When he saw what they were doing, he circled around the one with the largest threshing floor three times and then sat on it. Then he said: 'Call your companions.' He did not stop measuring for them until Allah fulfilled my father's trust, and by Allah, I was pleased with Allah fulfilling my father's trust and not returning to my sisters with a single date. Allah secured all of the threshing floors, to the point that I was surely looking at the threshing floor that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on, yet it was as if not a single date was detracted from it. (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālik:

Abū Ṭalhah once said to Umm Sulaym: 'I have heard weakness in the voice of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and know that it is from hunger. Do you have anything?' She said yes. So she brought out some platters of barley bread, took a headscarf of hers and wrapped some of the bread with it, and then put it under my arm. She then sent me [Anas] to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. I went to him and found him sitting in the mosque with some people. I went up to him and he said: 'Did Abū Ṭalhah send you?' I said yes. He said: 'With food?' I said yes. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to those around him: 'Stand and go!' So they went, and I went ahead of them so that I could go to Abū Ṭalhah and inform him.

Abū Ṭalhah said: 'O Umm Sulaym! The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is with people and we do not have anything to feed them.' She said: 'Allah and His Messenger are most knowledgeable.' So Abū Ṭalhah went out until he met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came forward with Abū Ṭalhah until they entered. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Come with whatever you have, O Umm Sulaym!' So she came with that bread. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered for it, so she broke it up and squeezed some butter on it to give it some flavour. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said over it whatever Allah willed for him to say. Then he said: 'Let ten inside.' So they were let in, they ate until they were satiated, and left. He said again: 'Let ten inside,' until all the people ate and were satiated. They were 70 or 80 men.' (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh, [it is narrated] that he invited the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to a small amount of barley and goat meat. The Messenger supplicated Allah over the pan and the oven, and those with him—who were 300—ate. [Jābir said:] 'We ate, and he directed us [to give] to our neighbours. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ left, the increase left' (Bukhārī and Muslim).

We have narrated about him increasing food through blessing it so that a large number of people could eat from it, and multiplying water through his supplication through other paths, including the hadith of Samurah about the platter that extended from the sky, the hadith of Abū Ayyūb, the hadith about the sheep that he bought from the desert Arab, the hadith about the milk to which he called the People of the Ledge (*ahl as-ṣuffah*), the hadith about the barley bread he left for 'Ā'ishah, the hadith about the barley bread he gave to a man, the hadith about the clarified butter that remained with a woman in the skin, and other than these among the rest of the hadiths with the same meaning (with their chains), by which the book would be prolonged if we were to mention. What we have pointed out here is sufficient; and the enablement is through Allah.

On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd:

I used to shepherd for ‘Uqbah ibn Abī Mu‘īṭ. Once, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه passed by me. The Prophet said: ‘O boy! Is there any milk?’ I said: ‘Yes, but I am entrusted with these sheep.’ He said: ‘Is there a sheep that has not been approached by a male?’ So I went to him with a sheep, he wiped its udder and milk came out. He milked it into a container, drank [himself] and gave Abū Bakr some to drink. Then he said to the udder: ‘Close!’ and it closed. I went to him after this and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Teach me from that saying!’ He wiped my head and said: ‘Allah have mercy on you, for indeed you are taught.’ (Aḥmad)

On the authority of al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib:

Abū Bakr bought a riding animal from ‘Āzib for thirteen dirhams. Abū Bakr said to ‘Āzib: ‘Have Barā’ bring my riding animal.’ ‘Āzib said to him: ‘Not until you tell me what you and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did when you fled Makkah and the polytheists were after you.’ Abū Bakr said: ‘We snuck out of Makkah at night. We were up all night and all day until one noon I looked out to see if there was any shade we could rest under. I saw a boulder that had some shade under it, so I straightened it up and laid out a hide for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to sit on. I said: ‘Lay down, O Messenger of Allah,’ so he stretched out. Then I began looking over our surroundings to watch out for anyone looking for us. There was a shepherd leading his flock to the boulder, intending the same thing I intended (i.e. the shade). I asked him: ‘To whom do you belong, O boy?’ He said: ‘A man of the Quraysh.’ He named him, and I knew him. I asked him: ‘Is there any milk in your flock?’ He said yes. I asked: ‘Would you milk some for me?’ He said yes. So he tied a sheep from his flock, and I ordered him to pull up its udder from the dust and lift his hands. He said: ‘Like this?’ and struck one of his hands with the other. He milked a small amount for me. I had brought with me a container for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, which had a cloth over its opening. I poured over the milk until the bottom cooled off, and went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who had coincidentally woken up. I said: ‘Drink, O Messenger of Allah!’ So he drank until he was satisfied. Then I said: ‘It is time to go, O Messenger of Allah,’ so we left and the people were still after us.

No one among caught up with us except Surāqah ibn Mālīk ibn Ja’sham, who was on a steed. I said: ‘He has caught up with us, O Messenger of Allah!’ He said: ‘Do not distress, Allah is indeed with us.’ When he got close to us—and there was the length of two or three spears between us—I said: ‘He has caught up with us, O Messenger of Allah!’ and cried. He said: ‘What has made you cry?’ I said: ‘By Allah, I do not cry for myself, but rather I cry for you.’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed against him and said: ‘O Allah! Suffice us from him with whatever You will.’ So his horse sank to the ground up to its belly, and he jumped off of it. He said: ‘O Muḥammad! I know that

this is your doing! So ask Allah to save me from what I am in, for by Allah, I will surely blind whoever is behind me from the bounty hunters. This is my quiver; take an arrow from it. Verily you will pass by my camels and my sheep in such-and-such a place; take whatever you need from them.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘We have no need for your camels or your sheep.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed for him, so he returned back to his companions, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and I went on until we arrived in Madinah at night. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

The hadiths about him praying against one of the polytheists, praying for one of the Muslims, praying for rain and praying while in confinement and Allah’s ﷻ answering him with whatever he asked for are many, and they are mentioned in the book *Dalā’il [an-Nubuwwah]* with their chains .

On the authority of Jābir:

I once went out travelling with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ wanted to relieve himself, he would go far away until no one could see him and descend to a low place on the ground that had no marks or trees. He said to me: ‘O Jābir! Take the container and come with us.’ So I filled the container with water, and we went. We walked until we could hardly see, and there were two trees between which there was a cubit. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘O Jābir! Go and say to that tree: “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ says to you: Come with your companion so that I may sit behind you.”’ So I did that, and it moved until it met its companion, and he sat behind them until he finished relieving himself. Then we went back, left and carried on. It was as if a bird was over us providing shade. Thereafter we ran into a woman carrying a child who presented herself to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. She said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Verily Satan takes this son of mine three times a day and does not leave him.’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stopped, took him and put him between him and the head of the riding animal. He said: ‘Be gone, O enemy of Allah! I am the Messenger of Allah!’ He repeated that three times and then gave him to his mother. When we returned, we were by the same water when the woman presented herself to us and had two rams that she was driving and was carrying the child. She said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Accept this gift of mine, for by He who sent you as a prophet with the truth, he has not returned to him since.’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Take one of them from her and leave the other.’

Then we continued on with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the camel of a caller came. When it was between our two mats it fell prostrate. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘O people! Who is the owner of this camel?’ Some young man from the Helpers said: ‘Ours, O Messenger of Allah.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘What is with it?’ The young men said: ‘We allowed it to graze for twenty years, so when he grew older

and got some fat on him we intended to slaughter it and divide it among our slaves.’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Will you sell him to me?’ They said: ‘It is yours, O Messenger of Allah!’ He said: ‘Then treat it well until its time comes.’ They said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! It is more fitting for us to prostrate to you than it is for beasts!’ He said: ‘No human being should prostrate to another human being. And if the case were otherwise, then it should be wives prostrating to their husbands.’ (Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah)

‘Ubādah ibn al-Walīd has narrated from Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh the story of the two trees complying with our Prophet ﷺ, their coming together in order for him to take cover behind them and their subsequent separation (Muslim).

Ya‘lā ibn Murrah narrated from his father—and it is said that it was actually him, and not his father—that he witnessed these three miracles of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ just like Jābir witnessed them (Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

We narrate the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ calling a date cluster, its descent from the palm tree, its walking to him and its subsequent return to its place (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad).

Also there is the hadith of Jābir and others about the story of Khaybar wherein the mutton informed the Prophet that it was poisoned (Abū Dāwūd).

Also there is the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī about the wolf testifying for our Prophet ﷺ that he was given the message (Bukhārī).

The Prophet spat in ‘Alī’s ﷺ eye on the Day of Khaybar (due to an inflammation in it) and prayed for it, so it was healed as if there was never any pain in it, and ‘Alī’s eyes never had any problems thereafter (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He has many signs and clear indications from his prayers, seeking rain and seeking healing, and Allah’s ﷻ answering him in regards to all of that. His miracles are more than can be counted and too well known to be hidden. Our only point here is to mention a sample from every kind, through which our intention for this book is made clear.

We have narrated that a group of the Prophet’s ﷺ Companions saw Jibrīl ﷺ in the form of Daḥiyah al-Kalbī while Daḥiyah was absent (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the day of Uhud, Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ saw two men—one of them on the right of the Prophet ﷺ and the other on his left—wearing white clothes and fighting very fiercely. He did not see them before that nor afterwards, for they were angels (Bukhārī and Muslim).

As for the Prophet ﷺ informing about the fulfillment of things in the days of his life and after his death, and the manifestation of his truthfulness regarding all of that, then it is abundant, and transmitted in the book *Dalā’il [an-Nubuwwah]*.

Indeed while in Makkah he informed about the worm destroying a piece of the Quraysh's document, so it was brought and found to be as he said.

When he informed about his nocturnal journey to Jerusalem and then to the seven heavens, he was denied about it. So he informed about their caravan that he saw on the way and its arrival, and details about Jerusalem, and it was as he said (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He informed his Companions about what happened to Zayd ibn Ḥārithah, Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib and 'Abdullāh ibn Rawāḥah in [the battle of] Mu'tah, and announced their deaths before news of it came (Bukhārī).

He also announced the death of the Negus on the day in which he died (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He informed about the letter of Ḥāṭib ibn Abī Balta'ah (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He informed about matters in which affirmation was found in all of them, and narrating that entirely here would prolong the book.

He promised his community the military victories that were fulfilled after him, and warned them about the strife that would begin at the end of 'Uthmān's caliphate, and it appeared at his assassination and afterwards. He also informed about the duration in which the caliphate would remain after him (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī and Aḥmad).

He alluded to the kings from the Umayyads who would be after the caliphs, followed by the Abbasids, and they were just as he said. He also named a group of his Companions as being martyrs, and they were martyred after him (Muslim).

He informed that 'Abdullāh ibn Salām would not be martyred except that he would die upon Islam, and it was as he informed (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He informed about the tribulation that would afflict 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He also informed about 'Ammār ibn Yāsir being killed (Bukhārī and Muslim), and the son of his daughter, al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī, being killed (Aḥmad). He also informed about al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī, the son of his daughter, reconciling between two great factions of the Muslims, and all of that was fulfilled (Bukhārī).

He personally announced the death of Fāṭimah to her, and informed her that she would be the first of his family to meet him, and it was as he said (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He gave good news to his community about Allah sparing them the evil of al-Aswad al-'Ansī and Musaylamah, the two great liars, and it was as he informed (Bukhārī and Muslim).

He mentioned Uways al-Qarnī and described him, and it was fulfilled thereafter (Muslim).

A man among the Helpers apostatized and joined the disbelievers, and used to recite Sūrat al-Baqarah and Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān, then he died. The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘The earth will not accept him.’ He was buried multiple times, and the earth did not accept him (Bukhārī and Muslim).

There are numerous matters of every kind of indication that affirm him, which we have mentioned in the book *Dalā’il an-Nubuwwah*. Whoever wants to know them with their chains may refer to it, if Allah ﷻ wills.

Our Prophet ﷺ has a tremendous rank and a noble position due to him being the Seal of Prophethood, and it was an obvious mark on his upper back that the People of the Book knew about, as well as the rest of his attributes that they found written in their books. Furthermore, his heart was opened, then the portion that Satan touched was removed and it was washed. This was an obvious matter witnessed by the group that was with him (Muslim).

Ibn ‘Abbās said about His ﷺ saying,

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّؤْيَا الَّتِي أَرَيْنَاكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلنَّاسِ

‘We did not make the vision that We showed you anything but a test for people’ (Qur’ān 17:60): ‘It is the physical vision that the Prophet ﷺ was shown on the night he was taken for a journey’ (Bukhārī). We have mentioned the stories of the Ascension, the opening of his chest and the Seal of Prophethood in the book *Dalā’il an-Nubuwwah*.

As for Allah’s ﷻ saying,

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ

‘He surely saw him on the clear horizon’ (Qur’ān 81:23)

and

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ

‘He surely saw him at another place’ (Qur’ān 53:13),

then ‘Ā’ishah has said:

I am the first person in this community to ask the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about this. He said: ‘It is about Jibrīl. I never saw him in his natural form other than these two times. I saw him coming down from the sky, filling it completely. The massiveness of his form filled what was between the sky and the earth.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

In the hadith of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd about this verse,

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ

‘He approached two bows’ length or even closer’ (Qur’ān 53:9),

[he said]: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “I saw Jibrīl ﷺ. He has 600 wings”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

Ibn ‘Abbās was of the opinion that he saw his Lord twice, and interpreted these two [aforementioned] verses as being about him seeing his Lord ﷻ; and Allah is most knowledgeable. We have already mentioned the opinions of the Companions and other than them in regards to that, along with their chains, in the books *al-Asmā’ wa aṣ-Ṣifāt* and *ar-Ru’yah*.

Section

The prophets’ (ﷺ) souls are returned to them after they are taken, so they are alive with their Lord, like martyrs. Our Prophet ﷺ saw a group of them on the Night of the Ascension, and was ordered to offer prayer with them.

He informed—and his information is true—that our salutations are presented to him, our greetings of peace are conveyed to him, and that Allah has prohibited the earth from consuming the bodies of the prophets. We have written a book exclusively concerned with establishing their life [in the grave].

Our Prophet ﷺ was written as a prophet and messenger with Allah ﷻ before He created anything. He is still, after his soul was taken, Allah’s Prophet, His Messenger, His intimate friend and His elect from His creation. Those who convey his commands and prohibitions are his successors. Thus his message remains and his shariah is manifest until the command of Allah ﷻ comes. May Allah bless him and give him abundant peace, along with his family!

1 This name means ‘one who depends on Allah’. Tr.

2 After saying this, Bayhaqī gives a number of examples to illustrate the superior rhetoric of the Qur’ān. This cannot be effectively and profitably rendered into English, so it has been omitted. Tr.

3 In general terms, *jizyah* was the poll tax that was paid traditionally to the caliph of an Islamic polity by non-Muslims who were male, adult and free. For an elaboration of the rules for *jizyah* stipulated by early Islamic jurists, see Ibn Rushd, *The Distinguished Jurist’s Primer: Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid*, trans. Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee (Reading, UK: Garnet, 2002, reprint), 1:483–7. For a late-standardised Shāfi‘ī articulation of the rules of *jizyah*, see *Reliance of the Traveller*, 602–3 and 607–9. Ed.

4 The matter in square brackets is missing from the edition of Bayhaqī used for this translation, but it is in the narration of the hadith. See, albeit with slight variations in the

Arabic, *English Translation of Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī*, trans. Abu Khaliyl (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 6:329 (3633); *The Translaton of the Meanings of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, trans. Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997), 4:472 (3579). The specification of ‘little water’ in the ‘container’ is found in the Bukhārī version, not the Tirmidhī one. Ed.

5 ‘Day of the Tree’ refers to the occasion surrounding the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah. Tr.

CHAPTER 30

THE MIRACLES OF SAINTS

Allah ﷻ said:

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا
قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

‘Every time Zakariyya entered her prayer niche, he found that she had provision. He said: “O Maryam! Where did you get this from?” She said: “It is from Allah.” Indeed Allah provides for whomever He wills without account’ (Qur’ān 3:37).

He said in the story of Sulaymān ﷺ:

‘He who had some knowledge of the Book said: “I will bring it to you before you blink”’ (Qur’ān 16:40).

This refers to one who was not a prophet, and it is not permissible for miracles to appear from liars. As for truthful people, then it is permissible, and is an indication of the truth of whomever He affirms among Allah’s ﷻ prophets.

Our Prophet ﷺ has told the story of the miracles that appeared from Jurayj the Monk, the boy who abandoned sorcery and followed the monk, and the group of Israelites who sought help in a cave closed by a boulder, and other than these that indicate the permissibility of this [belief]. Miracles have appeared from his Companions in his time and after it, then from righteous people from his community in a way that obligates believing in its permissibility; and the enablement is through Allah.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent a troop of ten to a well and put ‘Āṣim ibn Thābit, the grandfather of ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar, in charge of them. So they departed until they reached Had’ah, between ‘Asfān and Makkah, where they were followed by a group of 100 armed men from Banū Lahyān. This group found the food they left behind and said: ‘These are dates of Yathrib.’ When ‘Āṣim and his companions sensed them, they sought refuge in a desert tract. The armed group said: ‘Come down, and you have [our] promise and word that we will not kill any one of you.’ ‘Āṣim said: ‘As for me, I will not come down today with the word of protection from a disbeliever. O Allah!

Convey greetings of peace from us to your Prophet.’ So they fought them, and seven were killed.

Three came down according to the promise and word. When Banū Lahyān got a hold of them, they undid the strings on their bows and shackled them. One of the three said: ‘By Allah, this is the first part of their treachery!’ So they grabbed him and killed him. They left for Makkah with Khubayb ibn ‘Adī and Zayd ibn ad-Dathanah and sold them, and this was after the battle of Badr. The sons of Ḥārith bought Khubayb—the latter had killed Ḥārith at Badr. A daughter of Ḥārith said: ‘So Khubayb was a prisoner with us. By Allah, I never saw a prisoner better than Khubayb. By Allah, I saw him eating some grapes, and at the time there were no grapes in Makkah. It was only provision that Allah provided for Khubayb.’

She said: ‘He borrowed a razor from me to shave before being killed. I lent it to him, and a son of mine crawled to him while I was not paying attention. I saw him sit my son on his chest, and was terrified to the point that Khubayb noticed. He said to me: “Do you think that I am going to kill him? I most certainly would not.” When they all agreed to kill him he said to them: “Let me pray two units of prayer.” So he prayed two units of prayer and said: “If it were not for you thinking I was afraid, I would have prayed more.”’ Khubayb was the first to enact the prayer of one who is to be killed. He said: ‘O Allah! Number them, kill them all and do not leave a single one of them.’ [Then he recited a poem:]

I do not care so long as I am killed as a Muslim;

as, in any event, it is in Allah’s cause.

Besides, that is the right of Allah; and if He wills,

He shall bless the mutilated limbs.’¹

Abū Hurayrah said: ‘The polytheists sent for some part of ‘Āṣim ibn Thābit’s corpse to be brought—he had killed an important man among them. Allah sent something like a shadow that covered him from their messengers, so they were not able to take anything from his corpse.’

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk:

Asyad ibn Ḥuḍayr al-Anṣārī and another man from the Helpers were with the Messenger of Allah for some need, and they left at night during a time when it was extremely dark. In each one of their hands was a stick. One of their sticks lit the path they were walking, until their point of separation. One lit the stick of the other, and each walked with the light of his stick until they reached their families.

We also narrate that angels once descended to hear Asyad ibn Ḥuḍayr recite the Qurʾān, whereby he saw lights similar to lamps in something like a shadow. The Prophet ﷺ said to him: ‘These angels came because of your voice’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

On the authority of ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr:

The People of the Ledge were poor. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once said: ‘Whoever has food for two should feed three. Whoever has food for four should feed five or six.’ Abū Bakr had three people—himself, my mother and me. (The narrator doubts whether he said ‘my wife and a servant that lived between our house and my father’s house.’) Abū Bakr also had the Messenger of Allah ﷺ over for dinner, and he brought ten people with him. Abū Bakr stayed until I prayed the night prayer. Then he returned and stayed until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ate dinner, and later that night whoever Allah willed to come, came. My father’s wife said to him: ‘What has kept you from your guests?’ He said: ‘Have you not eaten dinner?’ She said: ‘They refuse to eat until you come.’ So I went and hid myself. Abū Bakr said: ‘Eat! By Allah, I will not have any of it.’ By Allah, we did not take a single piece except that the bottom increased. We were satiated, and the meal was more than what it was before. So Abū Bakr looked at it, and it was the same or more. He said to his wife: ‘O sister of Banū Firās! What is this?’ She said: ‘I do not know! By the coolness of my eyes, it is three times more than it was before!’ So Abū Bakr ate from it and said: ‘That oath of mine was from Satan,’ then he carried it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. There was a covenant between people and us, and its time was up. We knew twelve men, each had people with him; and Allah is most knowledgeable of their number. All of them ate from it. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

We have narrated miracles that appeared to a number of saints in the life of our Prophet ﷺ, and there are many supporting narrations that we mentioned in the book *Dalāʾil an-Nubuwwah* and other than it.

In addition, we have narrated in *Faḍāʾil aṣ-Ṣaḥābah* miracles that appeared to some of the Companions after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Now repeating them in this book would be too long to explain, so we have abridged them, and that is sufficient.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar:

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sent out an army and put a man called Sāriyah in charge. So ‘Umar was once preaching and began screaming from the pulpit [in Madīnah]: ‘O Sāriyah, the mountain! O Sāriyah, the mountain!’ The messenger of the army later arrived and asked him: ‘O Emir of the Believers! We met our enemy, and they were routing us. Verily there was someone screaming, “O Sāriyah, the mountain! O Sāriyah,

the mountain!” So we attacked with the mountains behind us and Allah routed them.’ It was said to ‘Umar: ‘Indeed you were screaming that.’

We have narrated from various paths from the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ؑ that he said: ‘We would not deny—and we were abundant—that a knife would speak with the tongue of ‘Umar.’ On the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd: “Umar used to say something, and we would wait for it to happen.’ How could this not be the case when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Verily there were clairvoyants in previous communities. If there is one in this community, he is ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’ (Bukhārī). This hadith is fundamental in regards to [believing in] the permissibility (*jawāz*) of the miracles of the saints.

In the reading (*qirā’ah*) of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b: ‘We did not send before you a messenger or a prophet’ or a clairvoyant. The reading of Ibn ‘Abbās is the same in some narrations. It was said to the Prophet ﷺ: ‘How is one spoken to?’ He said: ‘The angels speak upon his tongue.’ This agrees with what we narrated from ‘Alī and ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar ؑ.

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘How many are there among the weak and helpless who possess nothing except two dates; but if he were to adjure Allah, He would vindicate him. Among them are al-Barā’ ibn Mālīk.’ Barā’ met a group of polytheists and they said to him: ‘O Barā’! Verily the Prophet said that if you were to adjure Allah, He would vindicate you. So adjure your Lord.’ He said: ‘I adjure, my Lord, for what the strong among them have persecuted us with.’ So the strong among them persecuted and caused pain to the Muslims. The polytheists said: ‘Adjure your Lord, O Barā’!’ He said: ‘I adjure You, my Lord, for what the strong among them have persecuted us with, and provide me with martyrdom.’ So the strong among them persecuted, and Barā’ was killed as a martyr. (Ḥākim)

On the authority of Safīnah, the freed slave of the Prophet ﷺ:

I rode a boat in the sea and it wrecked, so I rode a board from it and landed in a forest with a lion in it. The lion was turned towards me, and when I saw it I said: ‘O Abū ‘l-Ḥārith! I am Safīnah, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ So it headed in my direction until it bumped me with its shoulder. Then it walked with me until it led me to the road. It growled for a moment and then hit me with its tail, so I realized that it was saying goodbye to me. (Ḥākim)

1 In addition to benefiting from the original translation by Nasir Abdussalam, I also sought assistance from various sources whilst editing this verse of poetry. Firstly, Lane’s *Lexicon* under *j-n-b*, accessed at ejtaal.net/aa/ on 30 June 2016. Secondly, the translation of

these verses by Nicolet Boekhoff-van der Voort, in Harald Motzki et al, *Analysing Muslim Traditions: Studies in Legal, Exegetical Maghāzī Ḥadīth* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 360. Thirdly, I would like to thank Mansur Ali, Abdul Aziz Suraqah and Khalid Williams for checking my rendition; and Khalid made a suggestion that led me to alter a part into its current form. Ed.

CHAPTER 31

THE COMPANIONS

Allah ﷻ said:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا
يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ
فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ
سُوْقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Those who are with him are harsh on the disbelievers, merciful between themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty and pleasure from Allah. Their marks are on their faces from the traces of prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah. Their likeness in the Gospel is a crop that brings forth its yield, so it blooms, strengthens and stands erect on its stem, amazing the growers; and the disbelievers are enraged by them. (Qur'ān 48:29)

Their Lord praised them, commended them beautifully and raised their mention in the Torah, the Gospel and the noble Qur'ān. Then He promised them forgiveness and a great reward. He said:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

'Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward' (Qur'ān 48:29).

In another verse, He informed of His pleasure with them:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ
عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

'The first among the Immigrants and the Helpers and those who followed them in goodness—Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him' (Qur'ān 9:100).

Then He gave them the good news of what He has prepared for them:

وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

‘He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow in which they will live forever. That is the grand achievement’ (Qur’ān 9:100).

He ordered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to pardon them and seek forgiveness for them:

فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ

‘Pardon them and seek forgiveness for them’ (Qur’ān 3:159).

He also ordered that they be consulted as a way of soothing their hearts and as a notice to rulers after him to consult in regards to rulings:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

‘So consult them regarding the matter, and when you resolve, rely on Allah’ (Qur’ān 3:159).

He encouraged those who come after them to seek forgiveness for them, and to not have rancour in their hearts for those who believe:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

‘Those who come after them say: “Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not put rancour for those who believe in our hearts. Our Lord, indeed you are Compassionate and Merciful” (Qur’ān 59:10).

The Messenger of Allah—may Allah bless him and give him peace along with his family—praised them and compared them to stars, thereby notifying his community to follow them in their religious affairs just as they follow the stars in the darkness of land and see for their benefit.

On the authority of Abū Mūsā:

We prayed the sunset prayer with the Prophet ﷺ and said: ‘If only we waited to pray the night prayer with him.’ So we did that, and he came out to us and said: ‘You have not ceased to be here!’ We said: ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allah. We thought we would

pray the night prayer with you.' He said: 'You were correct, and did well.' Then he raised his head to the sky and said: 'The stars are a security for the sky. When the stars go, whatever the people of the sky are promised comes. I am a security for my Companions. When I go, whatever my Companions are promised comes. My Companions are a security for my community. When my Companions go, whatever my community is promised comes.' (Aḥmad)

In a hadith with missing links (*mawṣūl*) he said: 'Indeed the likeness of my Companions is like the stars in the sky: whoever takes a star among them is guided' (Ibn 'Adī). The sound hadith which we narrated here supports its meaning. The Prophet ﷺ has here signalled to the disciples and Companions who aided his religion, took from his Sunnah and followed his command.

He said in a narration of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd from him: 'There is no prophet whom Allah ﷻ sent to a community except that he had among his community disciples and companions. They took from his *sunnah* and followed his command' (Ibn 'Adī)

Furthermore, he certainly bore witness to them being the best community. He said in narrations of 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, 'Ā'ishah, 'Imrān ibn al-Ḥuṣayn and Abū Hurayrah from him: 'The best people are my generation' (Muslim); and in some of the narrations: 'The best of my community is the generation which I was sent in.'

He said in a narration of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: 'Honour my Companions, for indeed they are the best of you.' And in another narration: 'Preserve me in my Companions' (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad). He therefore commanded that they be loved in what is narrated from him, and forbade insulting them. He informed his community that none of them would fill their place or reach their level, and that Allah has forgiven them.

On the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Do not insult my Companions, for if one of you spent the like of Uḥud in gold, he would not reach a *mudd*¹ of one of them or even half of it. No man who believes in Allah and the Last Day hates the Helpers.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Mughaffal al-Muzanī:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: '[Fear] Allah! [Fear] Allah in regards to my Companions! Do not take them as a target after me. Whoever loves them, loves them through love of me. Whoever hates them, hates them through hatred of me. Whoever annoys them has annoyed me, whoever annoys me has annoyed Allah, and whoever annoys Allah is on the verge of Him taking him.' (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

On the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ؑ:

The Messenger of Allah ؐ said to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ: ‘How do you know, perhaps Allah looked at the people of Badr and said: “Do as you will, for Paradise is incumbent for you.” ‘Umar’s eyes were then flooded with tears .

On the authority of Jābir:

Umm Mubashshir informed me that she heard the Prophet ؐ say to Ḥaṣṣah: ‘The People of the Tree who pledged allegiance under it will not enter the Fire, if Allah ؐ wills.’ She said: ‘To the contrary, O Messenger of Allah!’ So he reprimanded her, then she said: ‘There is not one among you except that he passes it’ (Qur’ān 19:71). So the Prophet ؐ said: ‘Allah ؐ has said: “Then we will save those who were God-fearing and leave the wrongdoers kneeling therein” (Qur’ān 19:72)’ (Muslim)

Ibn Mas‘ūd said:

Verily Allah ؐ looked at the hearts of the slaves, and found the heart of Muḥammad ؐ to be the best of people’s hearts. So He chose Muḥammad ؐ, sent him with His message and selected him with His knowledge. Then He looked at the hearts of people after him, so he chose his Companions and made them the helpers of His religion and the ministers of His Prophet. So whatever the believers view as good, then it is good with Allah; and whatever they view as bad, then it is bad with Allah.

Ibn ‘Abbās said: ‘Allah informed us in the Qur’ān that He is pleased with the People of the Tree. He knew what was in their hearts, so has He told us that He was angry with them afterwards?’

Aḍ-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim said: ‘Allah ؐ commanded us to seek forgiveness for them —i.e. the Companions of Muḥammad ؐ—and He knew that they would do what they did.’

Ibn ‘Umar said: ‘Do not insult the Companions of Muḥammad ؐ, for indeed the place of one of them for a moment is better than the deeds of one of you in his lifetime’ (Ibn Mājah).

1 This refers to the metric equivalent of 0.51 litres. See *Reliance of the Traveller*, 873. Ed.

CHAPTER 32

THE PROPHET'S FAMILY

Allah ﷻ said:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

‘Allah only wills to remove filth from you and purify you with a thorough purification, O People of the Household’ (Qur’ān 33:33).

The beginning of the verse is about the Prophet’s ﷺ wives and their being given a choice. When they chose Allah, His Messenger and the abode of the Afterlife, they had the great reward that Allah promised them. Then He distinguished them from the world’s women in regards to punishment and reward:

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ

‘O wives of the Prophet! You are not like other women. If you are mindful, then do not soften your speech so that he in whose heart is a disease may desire’ (Qur’ān 33:33).

He continued until He said:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

‘Allah only wills to remove filth from you and purify you with a thorough purification, O People of the Household.’

It is related with masculine wording in order to include other than them. Then He annexed ‘houses’ to them:

وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ مِّنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ

‘Remember Allah’s signs and the wisdom recited in your houses’ (Qur’ān 33:34).

He made them Mothers of the Believers:

النَّبِيِّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

‘The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are their mothers’ (Qur’ān 33:6).

He prohibited marrying them after the death of the Prophet ﷺ:

وَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْذُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا أَزْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا

‘It is not for you to annoy the Messenger of Allah, nor to ever marry his wives after him’ (Qur’ān 33:53).

He revealed in regards to the innocence of ‘Ā’ishah bint aṣ-Ṣiddiq when she was accused:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِنْكُمْ

‘Verily those who came with the slander were a group among you. . .’ (Qur’ān 24:11).

This verse is read in the mosques of the Muslims and their prayer, and written in their prayer niches, *muṣḥafs*¹ and boards until the Day of Recompense. In it is a clarification of her chastity, preservation and purity, and the great sin of he who accused her, his immense punishment and his curse in the world and the Afterlife. This is enough of an honouring for her, and whoever disparages her has a prepared punishment and continuous curses both now and forever more.

On the authority of Zayd ibn Arqam:

One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was preaching, so he praised Allah and extolled Him then said: ‘As for what follows, O people! I am only a human being. My Lord’s messenger is on the verge of coming, and I will answer him. Verily I am leaving with you two immense things. The first of them is Allah’s Book—therein is guidance and light. So cling to Allah’s Book and take from it.’ So he promoted Allah’s Book and spurred desire for it. Then he said three times ‘and the people of my household (*ahl al-bayt*). I remind you of Allah in regards to the people of my household!’

[The narration continues]:

Ḥuṣayn said to Zayd: ‘O Zayd! Who are the “people of his household”? Are his wives not from the people of his household?’ He said: ‘Of course! His wives are certainly from the people of his household. Furthermore, the “people of his household” are

whoever is prohibited from being given zakat after him.’ He said: ‘Who are they?’ He said: ‘The family of ‘Alī, the family of Ja‘far, the family of ‘Abbās and the family of ‘Aqīl.’ He said: ‘All of these are prohibited from being given zakat?’ He said yes. (Muslim)

Zayd ibn Arqam has clarified that his wives are from the people of his household, and the name ‘People of the Household’ for the wives is a verified position, and it is inclusive of ‘family’. The name ‘family’, however, is for everyone who is prohibited from taking zakat, from the children of Hāshim and the children of Muṭṭalib due to the Prophet’s ﷺ saying: ‘Verily zakat is impermissible for Muḥammad and Muḥammad’s family’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

In fact, his giving Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib a fifth of the spoils was a substitute for zakat. He said: ‘Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib are but a single thing.’ His wives could be called ‘family’ with the meaning of resemblance to lineage. So, Zayd intended to specifically mention the *family* from the *People of the Household*. The wording of the Prophet ﷺ in advising about them is general and includes the family and the wives. He has commanded us to pray for all of them.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Whoever is to be pleased by being measured with a copious measure should say when he prays for me: “O Allah! Have mercy on and magnify Muḥammad the Prophet; his wives, the Mothers of the Believers; his descendants; and the people of his household, like you had mercy on and magnified Ibrahim. Indeed you are praiseworthy and glorious.”’ (Abū Dāwūd)

He commanded praying for him, his wives and his descendants in the hadith of Abū Ḥumayd as-Sā‘idī. It is probable that he mentioned them specifically from the whole of the People of the Household as a way of emphasizing, just as he singled-out the descendants as a way of emphasizing. Then he went back to generalization in the hadith of Abū Hurayrah to include other than the wives and the descendants from his family for whom the name ‘People of the Household’ applies. And Allah is most knowledgeable.

On the authority of Umm Salamah:

‘Allah only wills to remove filth from you and purify you with a thorough purification, O People of the Household’ was revealed in my house. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent for Fāṭimah, ‘Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. He said: ‘These are my family.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What about us, are we from the “People of the Household”?’ He said: ‘Of course, if Allah wills.’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad)

This reinforces the inclusion of his family and his wives in the ‘people of his household’ that we mentioned. Loving all of them and loyalty to them in the religion is required of us.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Love Allah for what He nourishes you with from His blessings. Love me through loving Allah, and love the people of my household for the sake of loving me”’ (Tirmidhī).

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say on the pulpit: ‘What is with some men saying that blood relation to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ does not benefit on the Day of Resurrection? To the contrary, by Allah, my blood relatives are connected in the world and the Afterlife; and I certainly, O people, will be waiting for you at the Basin.’ (Aḥmad)

We have narrated what has been related about the superlative qualities of the People of the Household and the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il*. We narrate from ‘Ā’ishah, from Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, that the Prophet ﷺ said to her: ‘Are you not pleased to be the leader of the women of this community or the women believers?’ Ḥudhayfah, Abū Sa‘īd and others narrate that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Fāṭimah is the leader of the women of the people of Paradise.’ One of them added in his narration: ‘Except for Maryam bint ‘Imrān and Āsiyah bint Muzāḥim’ (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad).

In the narration of Ibn ‘Abbās: ‘The best women of the people of Paradise are Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad, Maryam bint ‘Imrān and Āsiyah bint Muzāḥim’ (Aḥmad).

In the hadiths of Abū Mūsā and Anas ibn Mālīk from the Prophet ﷺ: ‘The superiority of ‘Ā’ishah over other women is like the superiority of *tharid*² over other dishes’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

The Prophet said to his daughter Fāṭimah: ‘Do you not love what I love?’ She said: ‘Of course.’ He said: ‘Then love this one,’ meaning ‘Ā’ishah (Bukhārī and Muslim).

‘Ammār ibn Yāsir said to one who spoke ill of ‘Ā’ishah in the presence of ‘Alī (رضي الله عنه): ‘Stay chided! Do you annoy the beloved of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?’ (Tirmidhī). ‘Ammār also said: ‘Indeed she is the wife of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in this world and the Afterlife’ (Bukhārī).

In the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd and others from the Prophet ﷺ: ‘Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are the masters of the youth of the people of Paradise.’

All of the aforementioned, along with other superlative qualities of theirs, are mentioned in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il* with their chains. Whoever wants to read them should refer to it, if Allah ﷻ wills.

1 *Muṣḥaf* (plu. *maṣāḥif*) is a copy of the Qurʾān. Ed.

2 Lane, in his *Lexicon* under *th-r-d*, defines *tharīd* as ‘Bread *crumbled*, or *broken into small pieces*, with the fingers, and then *moistened with broth*. . .or [simply] *broken bread*’ (accessed at ejtaal.net/aa/ on 1 July 2016). Ed.

CHAPTER 33

THE TEN PROMISED PARADISE

Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah was in the Grand Mosque with the people of Kufa and Sa‘īd ibn Zayd said:

I testify by what my ears heard and my heart contained from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ—and I would not narrate a lie from him that he would ask me about when I meet him—that he ﷺ said: ‘Abū Bakr is in Paradise, ‘Umar is in Paradise, ‘Uthmān is in Paradise, ‘Alī is in Paradise, Ṭalḥah is in Paradise, Zubayr is in Paradise, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf is in Paradise, Sa‘d ibn Mālīk is in Paradise,’ and the ninth of the Muslims—if I wanted to name him, I would have named him.

[The narration continues]:

So the people of the mosque returned calling him, ‘O Companion of the Messenger of Allah! Who is the ninth?’ He said: ‘Do you implore me by Allah? By Allah the Almighty, I am the ninth of the believers and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is the tenth.’ Then he followed that up with an oath: ‘By Allah! Witnessing one incident with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is better than the deeds of anyone of you, even if he were to live the lifespan of Nūḥ.’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad)

Also on the authority of Sa‘īd ibn Zayd: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Ten are in Paradise: Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, Abū ‘Ubaydah and Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.’ Sa‘īd counted these nine and was silent about the tenth. So the people said: ‘We implore you by Allah, O Abū ‘l-A‘war! Are you the tenth?’ He said: ‘You have implored me by Allah. By Allah, Abū ‘l-A‘war is in Paradise’ (Tirmidhī).

It has also been narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that he testified for another group that are to be in Paradise. We have narrated in a previous chapter his saying in regards to whoever witnessed Badr and pledged allegiance under the tree.

CHAPTER 34

THE CALIPHS

On the authority of Safīnah, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The caliphate in my community is thirty years; thereafter there are kingdoms.’ Sa‘īd ibn Jamhān said: ‘Safīnah said to me: “Count the caliphates of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.” So we examined them and found that they were thirty years.’ ‘Abd al-Wārith ibn Sa‘īd corroborates this from Sa‘īd ibn Jamhān.

Also on the authority of Safīnah: ‘The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘The Prophetic Caliphate is thirty years.’ This is correspondingly narrated from ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr from his father from the Prophet ﷺ.

Abū Ma‘shar said:

Abū Bakr succeeded the Prophet in Rabī‘ al-Awwal when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died. Abū Bakr died and eight days remained from Jumādā al-Ākhirah, on a Monday in the year 13. His caliphate was two years and four months minus ten nights. ‘Umar was killed on a Wednesday, with four nights remaining from Dhū ‘l-Hijjah in the year 23. His caliphate was ten years, six months and four days. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān was killed on a Friday, 18 Dhū ‘l-Hijjah 35 [AH]. His caliphate was twelve years minus ten days. ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was killed on a Friday, 17 Ramadan 40 [AH]. His caliphate was five years minus three months, and it is said minus two months.

On the authority of Samurah ibn Jundub:

A man once said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! I saw in a dream something like a bucket descend from the sky, so Abū Bakr came, grabbed its handle and drank a sip from it. Then ‘Umar came, grabbed its handle and drank from it until he was full. Then ‘Uthmān came, grabbed its handle and drank from it until he was full. Then ‘Alī came, grabbed its handle and it broke apart, yet something of it appeared on him.’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad)

The sip of Abū Bakr ﷺ is the shortness of his tenure, and the appearance on ‘Alī ﷺ is the contention (*munāza‘ah*) that afflicted him concerning his authority. And Allah is most knowledgeable.

We have mentioned supporting narrations of this chapter in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il* from the book *Dalā’il an-Nubuwwah*.

Shāfi'ī said about the caliphate and preference (*tafḍīl*): 'We start with Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī (ﷺ).' Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said when asked about his position regarding the caliphate: 'Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī.' It was said to him: 'It is as if you hold the position of the hadith of Saḥīḥah.' He said:

My position is the hadith of Saḥīḥah, and something else. 'Alī was in the time of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān, yet was not called 'Emir of the Believers' and did not implement the Friday prayer or the prescribed punishments. Then after the killing of 'Uthmān, he did all of that. So I knew from this that what was not obligatory for him before that time was obligatory for him thereafter.

CHAPTER 35

THE CALIPHATE OF ABŪ BAKR

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah:

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered my house he said: ‘Bring Abū Bakr so that he may lead people in prayer.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Indeed Abū Bakr is a soft-hearted man. When he recites the Qur’ān he cannot stop crying, so if only you would order someone else!’ By Allah, I had no real objection except disliking the notion that people would have a bad omen about the first one to stand in the place of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. I repeated this two or three times. He said: ‘Abū Bakr is to lead the people in prayer. Indeed you are like the women plotting against Yūsuf.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk al-Anṣārī, who was under the Prophet ﷺ for ten years, serving and accompanying him:

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq used to lead people in prayer during the terminal illness of the Prophet ﷺ, until it was Monday and they were lined up for prayer. The Prophet ﷺ opened the curtain to the apartment and looked at us. He was standing, as if his face was a page from a *muṣḥaf*. Then he smiled and laughed. We were concerned that we would be tested in the prayer from the joy of seeing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. So Abū Bakr scooted back to join the first row, and thought that the Prophet ﷺ was coming out to pray. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ signalled with his hand for us to finish our prayer, and he went back in the apartment and closed the curtain. He died on that day of his. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

What Anas ibn Mālīk narrated about the closing of the curtain after he looked at them and the joy in their places lined up behind Abū Bakr was in the first unit of the morning prayer. Then he found some lightness in himself and prayed the second unit behind Abū Bakr. When Abū Bakr closed the prayer, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ finished the remaining unit, and died on that day.

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk: ‘The last prayer that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed with people he prayed in a single cloth wrapped over him, behind Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq’ (Tirmidhī).

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘When I was sleeping I saw myself on a well with a bucket. So I took from it and took from it whatever Allah willed. Then Ibn Abī Quḥāfah [i.e. Abū Bakr] took it and extracted a dip or two, and there was weakness in his extraction, and Allah will forgive him. Then I turned to my left and Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb took it. I have never seen a brilliant person from the people extract like the extraction of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

It was also narrated like this from Ibn ‘Umar from the Prophet ﷺ. Shāfi‘ī said: ‘The dream of a prophet is revelation.’ His saying ‘and there was weakness in his extraction’ means the shortness of its duration, the hastiness of his death, and his preoccupation with fighting the people of apostasy from the new conquests and acquisitions that ‘Umar attained through the length of his caliphate’s duration.

On the authority of Muṭ‘im:

A woman once came to the Prophet ﷺ and talked to him about something, so he ordered her to come back to him. She said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What if I come back and do not find you?’ (It was as if she meant death) He said: ‘If you do not find me, then go to Abū Bakr.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

We have narrated from the Prophet ﷺ in the hadith of Abū Qatādah about the story of the pot the generality of the Prophet’s ﷺ saying: ‘If they obey Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, they will be guided.’

On the authority of Hudhayfah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Follow the two who are after me—Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, be guided by the guidance of ‘Ammār and cling to the knowledge of Ibn Mas‘ūd”’ (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered my home on a day that was my turn. I said: ‘My head is aching!’ He said: ‘If your headache is that severe, I wish that I would be alive to pray over you and bury you.’ I said out of jealousy: ‘That will be the day I give you up to some of your other wives!’ He said: ‘My head is aching! Call your father and your brother for me so that I may have something written, for indeed I am afraid that someone will wish and say something, yet Allah and the believers refuse anyone except Abū Bakr ﷺ.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

We narrated from the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī that the Prophet ﷺ sat on the pulpit at the beginning of his terminal illness and said: ‘O people! Verily the most trusted person to me with his person and his property is Abū Bakr’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

In the hadith of Abū 'l-Ma'lā: 'No one among the people is more trusted to us in his companionship and his possessions than Ibn Abī Quḥāfah' (Tirmidhī and Aḥmad).

In the hadith of Abū 'd-Dardā' and others [it is narrated] from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'Verily Allah sent me to you and you said: "You are lying." Abū Bakr said: "You are telling the truth," and supported me with his person and his property. So are you leaving my companion to me?' (Bukhārī).

These reports, and others with the same meaning, indicate that the Prophet ﷺ regarded Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq to be the caliph after him. So he notified his community of this through mentioning his superlative quality, his precedence and the goodness of his effect. Then he ordered them to pray behind him and to follow him and 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه).

He did not instruct explicitly because he knew through Allah's notification that the Muslims would unanimously agree on him, and that his caliphate would take effect by their unanimous agreement on pledging allegiance to him. The Book of Allah ﷻ has indicated the leadership position of Abū Bakr and those after him from the caliphs. Allah ﷻ said:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن
بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ

Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among you that He will give them authority on the earth like He gave authority to those before them, and He will establish their religion, which He is pleased with, for them; and replace their fear with security. They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. Whoever is ungrateful after that, then those are the sinful ones (Qur'ān 24:55).

He also said:

'Those who, if We firmly establish them on the earth, establish the prayer, give zakat, command the good and forbid the objectionable' (Qur'ān 15:41).

Since this quality of succession and firm establishment is found in the matter of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, it indicates that their caliphates were right.

The leadership of The Honest One [Abū Bakr] (aṣ-Ṣiddīq) is also indicated in Allah's ﷻ saying in Sūrat Barā'ah [or at-Tawbah] to those who remained sitting and did not help the Prophet ﷺ and go out with him on the battle of Ḥudaybiyyah:

فَقُلْ لَّنْ تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنْ تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا

‘Say: You will not go out with me ever, nor will you fight an enemy with me’ (Qur’ān 9:83).

He said in another *sūrah*:

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۖ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُبَدِّلُوا
كَلَامَ اللَّهِ

‘Those who stayed behind will say when you head out to take spoils: “Let us follow you.” They want to replace Allah’s speech’ (Qur’ān 48:15),

meaning His saying: ‘Say: You will not go out with me ever.’ Then He said:

كَذَلِكَ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ فَسَيَقُولُونَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُونَنَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا لَا يَفْقَهُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

‘Like this, Allah said from before. They will say: “Rather, you envy us.” To the contrary, they do not understand except a little’ (Qur’ān 48:15).

He said:

قُلْ لِّلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سَتُدْعُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ أُولِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ تُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ أَوْ
يُسَلِّمُونَ ۖ فَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ
يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

‘Say to those who stayed behind among the desert Arabs: You will be called to fight an extremely fierce people, or they will accept Islam. So if you obey’—i.e. you obey the caller to fight them—‘Allah will give you a beautiful reward. If you turn away’—i.e. turn away from answering the caller to fight them—‘as you turned away before, He will punish you with a painful punishment’ (Qur’ān 48:16).

The caller to that was other than the Prophet ﷺ, to whom Allah said: ‘Say: You will not go out with me ever, nor will you fight an enemy with me,’ and said in *Sūrat al-Faṭḥ*: ‘They want to replace Allah’s speech.’

So, He prevented them from going out with His Prophet ﷺ, and made their going out with him a shift of His speech, hence it is necessary that the caller who called them to fighting is a caller calling them after His Prophet ﷺ. Furthermore, Mujāhid has said

about His saying ‘an extremely fierce people’ that they are the Persians and the Romans, as did al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. ‘Aṭa’ said that they are the Persians.

In a narration from Ibn ‘Abbās they are Persians, and in another narration from him they are Banū Ḥanīfah at the battle of Yamamah. If they were the people of Yamamah, then they were fought in the days of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, and he was the caller to fighting Musaylamah. Furthermore, Banū Ḥanīfah are from the people of Yamamah.

If they were the Persians, then they were fought in the days of ‘Umar, and he was the caller to fighting Khosrow and the people of Persia. If they were the people of Persia and the Romans, then He intended their expulsion from the land of the Levant, and they were fought in the days of Abū Bakr, then fighting them and expelling them from the Levant was in the days of ‘Umar, along with fighting the Persians. So, by this the governance of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar is necessary [from the point of view of validity], and in the obligation of one of their governances is the obligation of the other. ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl al-Ash‘arī and others have adduced the verses we mentioned in regards to establishing the governance of The Honest One.

In addition, the governance of The Honest One is indicated by Allah’s saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ

‘O you who believe! Whoever among you apostatizes from his religion, Allah will bring a people He loves and they love Him’ (Qur’ān 5:54).

The apostasy of a people after the death of the Messenger of Allah was in Allah’s knowledge, so He promised His Messenger—and His promise is true—that He would bring a people whom He loved and they loved Him, humble with the believers and dignified with the disbelievers; they struggle in Allah’s path and do not fear the blame of any blamer. So when the apostasy of whoever apostatized after the death of the Messenger of Allah that was in His knowledge happened, the fulfillment of His promise also happened by Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq standing to fight them. So, he struggled with whoever obeyed him among the Companions against whoever disobeyed him among the desert Arabs, and for Allah’s sake did not fear the blame of any blamer, until he manifested the truth and obliterated falsehood. His fulfillment of His promise after the death of His Messenger became a sign for the worlds, and an indication of the correctness of the caliphate of The Honest One.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said about His saying ‘Whoever apostatizes from his religion, Allah will bring a people He loves and they love Him’: ‘They are those who fought the

people of apostasy among the Arabs with Abū Bakr, until they reverted to Islam after the death of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. 'Ikrimah, Qatādah and Ḍaḥḥāk said likewise.

We narrate from 'Abdullāh ibn al-Ahtam that he said to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz:

Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddiq stood up after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, called to his Sunnah and proceeded along his way, then the Arabs apostatized (or whoever among them apostatized) and proposed to establish the prayer without giving zakat. So Abū Bakr refused to accept anything from them except what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to accept in his life. Thus he pulled the swords out of their sheaths; lit the torches with fire; and rode against the supporters of falsehood with the people of Allah's truth, until they forced them to comply with what they fled from and entered them in the door that they exited from, up to when Allah took his soul.

Abū Hurayrah said: 'By He who there is no god but Him! If it were not for Abū Bakr succeeding, Allah would not have been worshipped.' He said this a second and third time, then it was said to him: 'What do you say, Abū Hurayrah!' He said:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ directed Usāmah ibn Zayd with a troop of 700 to the Levant. When he reached the wooded area, the Prophet's ﷺ soul was taken, and the Arabs around Madīnah apostatized. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gathered and said: 'O Abū Bakr! Bring these people back; they have left to Rome and the Arabs around Madīnah have apostatized!' He said: 'By He who there is no god but Him! If dogs were biting at the feet of the wives of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ I would not bring back an army that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent out, nor would I untie the knot of the banner of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.' So Usāmah marched on, and he did not pass a tribe who intended to apostatize except that they said: 'If it were not for them having some power, the likes of these would not have come out from among them. We will leave them until they confront Rome.' So they confronted the Romans, routed them, killed them and returned safely. Thus the Arabs around Madīnah were established on Islam.

CHAPTER 36

THE UNANIMOUS ALLEGIANCE TO ABŪ BAKR

He is Abū Bakr ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Āmir ibn Ka‘b ibn Sa‘d ibn Taym ibn Murrah al-Qurashī at-Taymī.

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died and Abū Bakr was at Sanḥ. ‘Umar stood and said: ‘By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not die!’ (‘Umar later said: ‘By Allah, no other thought occurred but that, and that Allah ﷻ will send him again so that he may cut off men’s hands and feet.’)

So Abū Bakr came, uncovered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and kissed him. He said: ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You were good in life and in death. By He in whose hand is my soul, Allah ﷻ does not ever make you taste death twice.’

Then he exited and said: ‘O you who swears on your messengers!’ When Abū Bakr spoke, ‘Umar sat. Then Abū Bakr praised Allah, extolled Him and said: ‘Whoever used to worship Muḥammad, surely Muḥammad has died. Whoever used to worship Allah, surely Allah is alive and does not die. “Verily you are dying and verily they are dying” (Qur’ān 39:30). “Muḥammad is not but a messenger. Messengers before him have passed. So if he dies or is killed, will you turn on your heels?”’ (Qur’ān 3:144)

The people began weeping bitterly. The Helpers gathered around Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubadah in the pavilion of Banū Sā‘idah and said: ‘A leader from us, and a leader from you.’ Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ went to them. ‘Umar started talking and Abū Bakr quieted him. ‘Umar was saying: ‘By Allah, I did not intend by that anything, but I had prepared some words that amazed me, and I feared that they would not reach Abū Bakr.’ So he spoke and conveyed, and said in his speech: ‘We are the leaders and you are the ministers.’

Al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir said: ‘No, by Allah! We will not ever do that. A leader from us, and a leader from you.’ So Abū Bakr said: ‘No! Rather, we are the leaders and you are the ministers,’ i.e. the Immigrants [are the ministers]. [He continued:] ‘[It must be] the Arabs most centrally located and with the best reputation, so pledge allegiance to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb or Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ.’ Hence ‘Umar said: ‘To the contrary, we pledge allegiance to you—the best of us, our master and the most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ ‘Umar took Abū Bakr by the hand and pledged

allegiance to him, and the people pledged allegiance to him. Someone said: ‘Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah killed you.’ So ‘Umar said: ‘Allah killed him.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Anas ibn Mālīk:

I heard ‘Umar’s last address while Abū Bakr was on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; and that was the day after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died. ‘Umar said the testimony of faith and Abū Bakr was silent. Then ‘Umar said: ‘As to what follows—indeed I made a statement to you yesterday, and it was not as I said. Verily, by Allah, I did not find the statement that I made to you in any book that Allah ﷻ revealed, nor anything that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught us. Rather, I had hoped that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was living and would be the last of us [to die]. However, Muḥammad ﷺ has died, and verily Allah ﷻ has placed a light among you by which you are guided, and Allah guided Muḥammad ﷺ by it. Hold on to it, and you will be guided to what Allah guided Muḥammad ﷺ.’ Then ‘Umar mentioned Abū Bakr and said: ‘Verily Abū Bakr is the companion of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the “second of two” (Qur’ān 9:40). Verily he is the most entitled among the Muslims to govern their affair.’ So they stood and pledged allegiance to him. A group of them had pledged allegiance before that, in the pavilion of Banū Sā‘idah, and the pledge of allegiance to him while he was on the pulpit was the pledge of the general people (*al-‘āmmah*).’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of ‘Abdullāh :

When the Messenger of Allah’s ﷺ soul was taken, the Helpers said: ‘A leader from us, and a leader from you.’ So ‘Umar came to them and said: ‘O Helpers! Do you not know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered Abū Bakr to lead the people in prayer?’ They said: ‘Of course.’ He said: ‘So who among you is comfortable being put before Abū Bakr?’ They said: ‘We seek refuge in Allah from being put before Abū Bakr.’ (Nasā’ī and Aḥmad)

Sālim ibn ‘Ubayd mentioned a hadith about the Prophet’s ﷺ terminal illness, him ordering Abū Bakr to lead the people in prayer, the Prophet’s death, the people’s referring to Abū Bakr at the Prophet’s ﷺ death, the funeral prayer over him, his burial, the place of his burial, Abū Bakr ordering his cousins to wash him, the Immigrants going out to the Helpers, and one of the Helpers saying ‘A leader from us, and a leader from you,’ and ‘Umar saying after taking Abū Bakr’s hand: ‘Who has the likes of these three verses about Abū Bakr? Allah said:

ثَانِيَانِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا

“The second of two, when they were in the cave,” and who are “they”? “When he said to his companion,” and who is “his companion”? “Do not distress, Allah is indeed with us” (Qur’ān 9:40)

and who was Allah with?’ Then he extended Abū Bakr’s hand and pledged allegiance to him, and the people pledged a nice, beautiful allegiance to him (Ibn Mājah).

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī:

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died, the speakers of the Helpers stood and a man among them said: ‘O Immigrants! Verily the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, if he used a man among you, partnered him with a man among us. We are of the opinion that two men should take authority: one of them from you, and the other from us.’ The speakers of the Helpers followed him in that. Zayd ibn Thābit stood and said: ‘Verily the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was from the Immigrants, thus the leader is indeed from the Immigrants! And we are his helpers, as we were always the helpers of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ So Abū Bakr stood and said: ‘May Allah reward you with good, O Helpers, and establish your speaker! If you did other than that, we would not have compromised with you.’ Then Zayd ibn Thābit took Abū Bakr by the hand and said: ‘This is your companion, so pledge allegiance to him.’ Then they came forward.

When Abū Bakr sat on the pulpit, he looked at the people’s faces and did not see ‘Alī. So he asked about him and a group from the Helpers stood and brought him. Abū Bakr said: ‘O cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ! Do you want to split the staff of the Muslims?’ He said: ‘There is no blame, O caliph of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ!’ So he pledged allegiance to him.

Az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām was also not pleased, so Abū Bakr asked about him until they brought him. He said: ‘O cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ! Do you want to split the staff of the Muslims?’ He said as ‘Alī said: ‘There is no blame, O caliph of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ!’ So he pledged allegiance to him.’ (Aḥmad)

The gathering of the Companions, including ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr is a sound report, so it is not permissible for anyone to say that what ‘Alī kept inside [himself] was different than what he manifested. ‘Alī was of greater stature and grander status than to go along with this immense matter for someone who had no right, or to show people something contrary to what was in his conscience. If this [contrary assertion] were permissible to claim about their agreeing on the caliphate of Abū Bakr, then scholarly consensus would never be valid. Yet scholarly consensus is among the proofs of the shariah, thus it is not permissible to render it useless by unsubstantiated notions.

That which is narrated concerning ‘Alī not pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr for six months is not from the saying of ‘Ā’ishah; rather, it is from the saying of Zuhri. Some of the narrators included it in the hadith of ‘Ā’ishah about the story of Fāṭimah ﷺ. Mu‘ammar ibn Rāshid [one of the narrators] memorized it and narrated it in detail, and removed the statement of Zuhri from the hadith.

We have narrated in a fully connected hadith from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī, and whoever corroborated him among the people of the battles (*ahl al-maghāzī*), that ‘Alī pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr in the public pledge after the pledge that occurred in the pavilion. It is probable that ‘Alī pledged allegiance to him in the public pledge, as we have narrated in the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī and other than him.

There was a dispute between Fāṭimah and Abū Bakr because of inheritance, for she did not hear from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ what Abū Bakr and others heard about inheritance. So, she is excused for what she sought, and Abū Bakr is excused for what he prevented. Nonetheless ‘Alī did postpone being in the presence of Abū Bakr until she died; but then he renewed the pledge and undertook its obligations, just as Zuhri said. It is not permissible [to think] of ‘Alī’s staying in his house as being due to dislike of Abū Bakr’s leadership. In the narration of Zuhri, ‘Alī pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr thereafter and magnified his right. If the matter were other than what we have said, his eventual pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr would be incorrect.

In fact whoever claims that ‘Alī pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr outwardly, while opposing him inwardly, has wronged the praise of ‘Alī when he was in charge, and said about him a most hideous saying. ‘Alī said while on the pulpit when he was in charge: ‘Shall I not inform you of the best of this community after its Prophet ﷺ?’ The Companions said: ‘Of course!’ He said: ‘Abū Bakr, and then ‘Umar.’ We claim that ‘Alī never did anything except what was the truth, and did not say anything except that it was true. Moreover, his actions with regards to pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr and supporting ‘Umar were appropriate to his superlative qualities, righteous deeds, preeminence, high opinion and good intention concerning advising the governor and the governed. He said in relation to Abū Bakr’s and ‘Umar’s superlative qualities what we have mentioned in the *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il*. There is no meaning to the statement of whoever says contrary to what ‘Alī said and did.

Furthermore, Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq entered Fāṭimah’s home during her terminal illness, and sought her pleasure until she was pleased with him. So it is futile for other than her, for one who claims the authority of the People of the Household, to be angered and defame the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and to disparage he who supported Abū Bakr (viz. ‘Alī) and accuse him of incapacity, weakness and discord between the hidden and the open in statement and action. Protection and enablement are through Allah!

Sha‘bī said:

When Fāṭimah was sick, Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq came to her and sought permission to enter. ‘Alī said: ‘O Fāṭimah! This is Abū Bakr. He seeks permission to enter and see you.’ She said: ‘Would you like for me to grant permission to him?’ He said yes. So she granted permission for him, and he entered to seek her pleasure. He said: ‘By Allah! I did not abandon home, wealth, family and tribe except to seek Allah’s pleasure, His Messenger’s pleasure and your pleasure, O People of the Household!’ Then he sought her pleasure until she was pleased.

Zayd ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī said: ‘As for me, if I were in Abū Bakr’s place, I would have ruled with what Abū Bakr ruled in relation to [the Prophet’s charitable bequests] in Fadak.’

As for the hadith of [‘Alī’s] appointment (*muwālāh*), then—presuming the soundness of its chain—there is no unambiguous text in it on the authority (*wilāyah*) of ‘Alī after the Prophet. We have narrated from some of its paths in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il* what indicates the Prophet’s ﷺ intent concerning that, which is that when he sent him to Yemen many complained about him and showed dislike of him. So the Prophet ﷺ wanted to mention his specialness and his love of him, and thereby encourage loving him, recognizing his authority and leaving antagonism towards him.

In some of the narrations it is said: ‘Whoever I was the master (*mawlāh*) of, ‘Alī is his master. O Allah! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be an enemy to whoever is an enemy to him!’ (Muslim). The intent of this is the loyalty and love of Islam, and that it is obligatory for Muslims to support one another and not to be adverse to one another. This is the meaning of what is established from ‘Alī ﷺ: ‘By He who split open the seed and unleashed the soul, the unlettered Prophet ﷺ let me know that no one loves me except a believer, and no one hates me except a hypocrite’ (Muslim).

In the hadith of Buraydah wherein he complained about ‘Alī, the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Do you hate ‘Alī?’ He said yes. He said: ‘Do not hate him; rather, love him and increase in love for him.’ Buraydah said: ‘After the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said this, no one among the people was more beloved to me than ‘Alī’ (Bukhārī).

Shāfi‘ī ﷺ said about the meaning of the Prophet’s ﷺ saying to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ ‘Whoever I was the master of, ‘Alī is his master’: ‘He meant by that the loyalty of Islam; and that is Allah’s ﷻ saying:

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ

“That is because Allah is the Protective Master of those who believe, and the disbelievers have no protective master” (Qur’ān 47:11).’

As for the statement of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to ‘Alī ‘You have woken as the master of every believer,’ Shāfi‘ī said about it: ‘[It means that he is] the protective friend of every Muslim.’

A man asked al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan: ‘Did not the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say “Whoever I was the master of, ‘Alī is his master”?’ He said:

Of course! By Allah, if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ meant by that governance and authority, he would have stated it unequivocally, for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was most sincere for the Muslims. He would have said: ‘O people! This is the one in authority over your affair and the one to stand over you after me, so listen to him and obey.’ By Allah, if Allah and His Messenger chose ‘Alī for this affair and made him the one to implement it for the Muslims after him, yet ‘Alī abandoned Allah’s and His Messenger’s command, then ‘Alī would be the first one to abandon Allah’s and His Messenger’s command.

As for the hadith of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ about the Prophet ﷺ leaving ‘Alī in charge [in Madinah] during the battle of Tabuk and ‘Alī said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! Do you leave me in charge of women and children?’ So the Prophet said: ‘Are you not pleased to be in the same position from me as the position of Hārūn to Mūsā, the only difference being that there is no prophet after me?’ (Bukhārī), then it does not mean that he left him in charge after his death. He only meant to leave him in charge of Madinah during his going out for the battle of Tabuk, just as Mūsā left Hārūn in charge when he went out to the mountain. How could his intention be to leave him in charge after his death when Hārūn died before Mūsā?

Furthermore, the reply to this and everything else related with its meaning is what we relate from al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib concerning ‘Alī’s ﷺ transcendence above concealing what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded him with. Ḥasan’s brother, ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Ḥasan, said likewise. We relate from him that he said:

Who is this who claims that ‘Alī was overpowered, and that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded him with affairs that he did not implement? It suffices as a defamation and disparagement of ‘Alī that a people would claim that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded him and he did not implement it!

In a number of hadiths that we have mentioned about the Prophet’s ﷺ terminal illness in the last part of the book *Dalā’il an-Nubuwwah* and in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il*, the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ admitted that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not leave anyone in charge after his death. We will mention some of them hereunder .

On the authority of Shāqīq ibn Salamah:

It was said to ‘Alī: ‘Were you left in charge of us?’ He said: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not leave anyone in charge that I may take charge accordingly. Rather, if Allah wills good for people, he gathers them around the best of them, just as He gathered them after the death of their Prophet ﷺ around the best of them.’

On the authority of ‘Amr ibn Sufyān:

When ‘Alī ﷺ appeared before the people on the Day of the Camel he said: ‘O people! Verily the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not teach us anything about this governance (*imārah*) until our opinion concluded to put Abū Bakr in charge. He implemented and was upright until he passed his course. Then Abū Bakr concluded in his opinion to leave ‘Umar in charge, so he implemented and was upright until the religion was firmly rooted. Then a people sought the world, so matters were as Allah willed them to be.’

Al-Ḥakam ibn Jaḥal said: ‘‘Alī addressed us in Basra and said: “Do not let anyone prefer me over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. I will not give anything to anyone who prefers me over them except a lashing like the prescribed punishment for false accusation (*ḥadd al-muftarī*).”’

Sālim ibn Abī Ḥafṣah said:

I asked Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī and Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr about Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and they said to me: ‘O Sālim! Be loyal to them and disavow whoever is adverse to them, for indeed they were two imams of guidance.’

Sālim also said:

Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad said to me: ‘O Sālim! Does a man insult his grandfather? Abū Bakr is my grandfather. Muḥammad’s ﷺ intercession on the Day of Resurrection would not include me if I were not loyal to them and did not disavow whoever was adverse to them.’

Tirmidhī said: ‘Umm Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad was the mother of Farwah bint al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq. Some of Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq’s descendants informed me of that.’

CHAPTER 37

THE CALIPHATE OF ‘UMAR

He is Abū Ḥaṣṣ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ibn Nufayl ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā ibn Riyāḥ ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Qarṭ ibn Ruzāḥ ibn ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b al-Qurashī al-‘Adawī ﷺ.

‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd said:

The most insightful of people are three: the king of Egypt when he recognised Yūsuf while people devalued him; the daughter of Shu‘ayb when she said to her father about Mūsā: ‘O my father! Employ him! Indeed the best you can employ is the strong and the trustworthy’; and Abū Bakr when he recognised ‘Umar and appointed him as caliph.

A group narrated this from Sufyān, from Abū Ishāq, from Abū ‘l-Aḥwaṣ, from ‘Abdullāh. Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab said:

When ‘Umar took authority he addressed the people on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He praised Allah and extolled Him, then said: ‘O people! I know that you used to describe me with severity and harshness. I was like that because I used to be with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and I was his slave and servant. He was as Allah (ﷻ) said: “compassionate and merciful with the believers” (Qur’ān 9:128). I was like an unsheathed sword in front of him, except he would put me in the scabbard or forbid me, so I withheld. Otherwise, I would stand over people in the place of his gentleness, and I never ceased to be like that with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until Allah caused him to die and he was pleased with me. So much praise is due to Allah for that, and I was even happier with him. Then I stood in that same place with Abū Bakr, the caliph of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after him. And he, like you all know, was generous, mild-mannered and gentle. So I was his servant, like an unsheathed sword between his hands over people. He mixed my harshness with his gentleness, unless he came to me, thus I would withhold, or otherwise I would serve. I never ceased to be like that until Allah caused him to die and he was pleased with me. So much praise is due to Allah for that, and I was even happier with him. Then your affair came to me today, and I know that someone will say “He used to be harsh with us when others had authority, so how will he be when he has authority?” Know that you have become familiar with me and experienced with me. I know, with Allah’s praise, from the Sunnah of your Prophet ﷺ what I know. I have never woken regretful over anything. If I wished to ask the Prophet ﷺ something I would ask. Know that my harshness that you used to

see from me has multiplied if I have authority over the oppressor, the aggressor and taking from the strong for the sake of the weak Muslims. Indeed, after this severity, I place my cheek on the ground for people in need, abstain from you and surrender. I do not mind, if there was something between me and one of your best, walking with him to whom you love among you and him examining what is between him and me. So fear Allah, O slaves of Allah, and help me over yourselves by desisting from me, and help me over myself by commanding the good, forbidding the objectionable and providing advice in regards to the authority Allah has given me.' Then he came down. By Allah, he fulfilled what he said, increased in harshness against the people of wrong and oppression, and increased in gentleness for the people of truth, whoever they were.

‘Alī said on the pulpit: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ preceded us, then Abū Bakr led us in prayer, then ‘Umar came thirdly. Thereafter tribulation afflicted us, and it is as Allah ﷻ willed.’

‘Alqamah said:

‘Alī addressed us on this pulpit. He praised Allah and extolled Him, and mentioned whatever Allah willed for him to mention. Then he said: ‘It has reached me that some people prefer me to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. If I had spoken previously about this, I would have rebuked him for it; however, I dislike punishing before prior warning. Now whoever says anything like that is a fabricator and has the punishment of a fabricator. Verily the best of people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. We innovated things after them for which Allah will do’—I think he said—‘whatever He likes.’

This narration has supporting narrations from ‘Alī ؑ that we have mentioned in *Kitāb al-Faḍā’il*.

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

When ‘Umar was put on his bed, the people gathered around him supplicating and praying. No one was paying attention to me except a man who grabbed my shoulders, so I turned around and it was ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He said: ‘By Allah, I have not come behind anyone for whom it is more beloved to me that Allah would endow me with the like of his deeds than you, even if I hope that Allah will put you with your two companions. I used to hear the Prophet ﷺ say: “I came, Abū Bakr came, and ‘Umar came. I left, Abū Bakr left, and ‘Umar left. I entered, Abū Bakr entered, and ‘Umar entered.” So I hope that Allah puts you with them.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn was asked: ‘What was the position of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?’ So he pointed to the Prophet’s grave and said: ‘Their position to him is like bedfellows at the Hour.’

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās:

I entered on ‘Umar when he was stabbed and said: ‘Accept the good news of Paradise, O Emir of the Believers! You converted to Islam when the people were disbelievers, struggled with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when the people forsook him, and the Messenger of Allah’s ﷺ soul was taken while he was pleased with you; no two people differed about your caliphate, and you were killed as a martyr.’ He said: ‘Come here to me,’ so I went closer to him. He said: ‘By Allah who there is no god besides Him, if I possessed all the gold and silver on the earth, I would sacrifice it from the terror of what is on the horizon.’

In another narration from Ibn ‘Abbās [he said to ‘Umar]:

You have accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and accompanied well, then he left while he was pleased with you. Then you accompanied Abū Bakr and accompanied well, and he left while he was pleased with you. You accompanied the Muslims and accompanied well, and if you leave them, you will leave them while they are pleased with you. (Bukhārī)

CHAPTER 38

THE CALIPHATE OF ‘UTHMĀN

He is Abū ‘Abdullāh, and it is said Abū ‘Amr ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ ibn Umayyah ibn ‘Abd Shams ibn ‘Abd Manāf al-Qurashī al-Umawī.

On the authority of Abū Bakrah:

The Prophet ﷺ once said: ‘Who among you saw a vision?’ A man said: ‘I saw a scale descend from the sky, so you and Abū Bakr were weighed, and you outweighed Abū Bakr. Then ‘Umar and Abū Bakr were weighed, and Abū Bakr outweighed. Then ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān were weighed, and ‘Umar outweighed. Thereafter the scale was lifted.’ We saw the dislike in the face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ (Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī)

In another narration from Abū Bakrah, the dislike is not mentioned, and there is the addition: ‘So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ deemed that bad and said: “There is the Prophetic Caliphate, then Allah will come with the kingdom of whomever He wills” (Abū Dāwūd).

On the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Tonight a righteous man was given a vision that Abū Bakr was entrusted with the Messenger of Allah, ‘Umar was entrusted with Abū Bakr, and ‘Uthmān was entrusted with ‘Umar”’ (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad). Jābir said: ‘When we left the Prophet ﷺ we said: “The righteous man is the Prophet ﷺ.” As for the mention of them being entrusted with one another, then they are the authorities of this affair that Allah sent His Prophet ﷺ with.’

On the authority of ‘Amr ibn Maymūn :

I saw ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb—and he mentioned the hadith of his stabbing. The people said: ‘Advise and leave someone in charge, O Emir of the Believers!’ He said: ‘No one is more worthy of this affair than that group whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased with when he died: ‘Alī, ‘Uthmān, Zubayr, Ṭalhah, Sa‘d and ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf. ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar witnesses with you, and he has nothing of this matter’—he said this to console him. ‘If Sa‘d is the one for the affair, then so be it, and if not, then seek aid from him for whichever one of you he commands; for I do not pick him out due to incapacity or treachery. I advise the caliph after me. . .’ then he mentioned his advice to the first Immigrants, then the Helpers, then the people of the major cities, then the desert Arabs, and then the non-Muslims under Muslim governance.

‘Umar was buried, and when his burial was finished the people returned home and the aforementioned group met.

‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Make your affair for three men among you.’ Zubayr said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Alī.’ Ṭalḥah said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Uthmān.’ Sa’d said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān.’ So ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Which of you will be free of this affair, and thus we make it for him, with Allah and Islam as his witness? For sure, he must thoughtfully consider which of the two is best and be avid about the welfare of the community.’ So, the two elders were silent.

‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Do you make it for me, with Allah as my witness that I do not deviate from choosing the best of you?’ They said yes. So he took the hand of one of them and said: ‘You have kinship to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and precedence in Islam that I have known, and Allah is over you that if I order you, you will most certainly act fairly, and that if I order ‘Uthmān, you will most certainly listen and obey.’ Then he went to the other and said the same thing. When he took their covenant he said: ‘Raise your hand, O ‘Uthmān,’ and pledged allegiance to him. ‘Alī also pledged allegiance to him, and the people of the house (*ahl ad-dār*) entered and pledged allegiance to him.

Al-Miswar ibn Makhramah also narrated this:

When they gathered, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said the testimony of faith and then said: ‘As for what follows—O ‘Alī! Indeed I have considered the people’s affair, and do not see them as being on par with ‘Uthmān, so do not make a way over yourself.’ He took ‘Uthmān’s hand and said: ‘I pledge allegiance to you according to the Sunnah of Allah, His Messenger and the two caliphs after him.’ So, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān pledged allegiance, and the people pledged allegiance—the Immigrants, the Helpers, the commanders of the armies and the Muslims. This was after ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān had consulted the people for three days, and every man of sound judgement that he privately consulted did not place anyone else on a par with ‘Uthmān. (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar: ‘In the Prophet’s time ﷺ we did not consider anybody on par with Abū Bakr after the Prophet ﷺ, followed by ‘Umar, followed by ‘Uthmān. Then we left the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, not preferring anyone among them’ (Bukhārī).

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah said:

I said to my father (viz. ‘Alī): ‘Which person is the best after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ?’ He said: ‘Abū Bakr.’ I said: ‘Then who?’ He said: ‘‘Umar.’ Then I was afraid of saying ‘Then who?’ but he said anyway: ‘‘Uthmān.’ So I said: ‘Then you, father?’ He said: ‘I am nothing but a man among the Muslims.’ (Bukhārī)

On the authority of Abū Mūsā:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered an enclosure and ordered that its entrance be guarded. A man came and sought permission to enter, so the Prophet said: 'Let him in, and give him the good news of Paradise.' It was Abū Bakr. Then another man came and sought permission to enter, so the Prophet said: 'Let him in, and give him the good news of Paradise.' It was 'Umar. Then another man sought permission to enter, so the Prophet paused for a moment and said: 'Let him in, and give him the good news of Paradise after a trial that will afflict him.' It was 'Uthmān. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Summons for me [a man from my Companions]!'—or 'If only there was a man from my Companions with me!' I said: 'Abū Bakr?' He said no. I said: 'Umar?' He said no. I said: 'Your cousin 'Alī?' He said no. Then I said: 'Uthmān?' He said yes. So 'Uthmān came. The Prophet said: 'Get up.' The Prophet ﷺ started whispering to 'Uthmān, and 'Uthmān's colour changed. On the day his killers entered his home we said: 'Will you not fight?' He said: 'No, indeed the Messenger of Allah ﷺ promised me a matter, and I am patient with myself concerning it' (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

We narrate in hadiths from Ibn 'Umar, Abū Hurayrah, 'Abdullāh ibn Ḥawālah and Murrah ibn Ka'b from the Prophet ﷺ about a tribulation that he mentioned, in which he alluded therein that 'Uthmān would be upon the truth, or upon guidance. In some of their narrations he said: 'Your duty is to the emir and his companions,' and he alluded to 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. In all of this and what we have mentioned in [*Kitāb*] *al-Faḍā'il* is an indication of the validity of his caliphate.

Shāfi'ī said: 'The Muslims unanimously agreed that the caliph be one, so Abū Bakr was put in charge, then Abū Bakr put 'Umar in charge, then 'Umar charged a council to choose one among them to select a caliph, so 'Abd ar-Raḥmān chose 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān.' We also narrate from Shāfi'ī: 'The best of people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī.' Shāfi'ī also said:

No one among the Companions and the Followers differed about the preference of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and their precedence over all of the Companions. He who differed among them only differed about 'Alī and 'Uthmān; and we do not accuse anyone of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for what they did.

We have mentioned the chains of this statement in *Kitāb al-Faḍā'il*, and have narrated similar to this from a group of the Followers and their followers; and enablement is

through Allah.

CHAPTER 39

THE CALIPHATE OF ‘ALĪ

On the authority of Safinah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The Prophetic Caliphate is thirty years, then Allah will give dominion to whomever he wills.”’ Then Safinah mentioned the caliphate of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī. Sa‘īd ibn Jamhān (the narrator from Safinah) said: ‘I said to Safinah: “Verily there are those who claim that ‘Alī was not a caliph.” He said: “The backsides of Banū az-Zarqā’ lied.”’

Zuhri said:

When ‘Uthmān was killed, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib came out to the people and called them to pledge allegiance to him, so the people pledged allegiance to him and did not consider Ṭalḥah or anyone else for it. This is because those who remained from the people of the consultation [summoned by ‘Umar on his deathbed] had forfeited their rights when they pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān (as previously mentioned), so no one remained among them who did not forfeit except ‘Alī. He was loyal in ‘Uthmān’s tenure until he was killed, and he was the best of those who remained of the Companions. No one was more worthy of the caliphate than him. Furthermore, he was not high-handed in demanding it—despite his being the worthiest of people for it—rather the pledge took its course for him, and those who remained from the people of the consultation pledged allegiance to him with the rest of the people.

Hasan said:

When ‘Alī arrived in Basra immediately after Ṭalḥah and his companions, ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Kawā and Ibn ‘Abbād stood and said to him: ‘O Emir of the Believers! Inform us of this travel of yours. Is it a bequest of the Messenger ﷺ, a pledge he took from you, or an opinion you viewed when the community split and its word differed.’ He said: ‘I will not be the first to lie on him. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not die suddenly nor was he killed. He lingered in his terminal illness, and throughout that the muezzin would come to him and call for the prayer and he would say: “Bring Abū Bakr to lead the people in prayer.” He left me and had seen my place. If he had taught me anything, I would most certainly have implemented it. This is to the extent that even one of his wives suggested to him: “Indeed Abū Bakr is a soft-hearted man. If he stands in your place, the people will not listen. If you would just order ‘Umar to lead the people in prayer. . .” So he said to her: “Indeed you are like the women plotting

against Yūsuf.” When the Messenger of Allah’s ﷺ soul was taken, the Muslims examined their affair. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had authorized Abū Bakr in their religious affair, so they authorized him in their worldly affair. Therefore the Muslims pledged allegiance to him, and I pledged allegiance to him with them. I used to go out to battle if he sent me, and accept what he gave me. I was a whip between his hands in regards to implementing the prescribed punishments. If there was any favouritism on his part, at his death he would have made the caliphate for his son; however, he selected ‘Umar, and ‘Umar did not fail. So the Muslims pledged allegiance to him, and I pledged allegiance to him with them. I used to go out to battle if he sent me, and accept what he gave me. I was a whip between his hands in regards to implementing the prescribed punishments. If there was any favouritism on his part, at his death he would have made the caliphate for his son. He disliked the idea of the body of the Quraysh electing a man and giving him authority over the affairs of the community and there not being any mistreatment towards whoever was after him except that it would come to ‘Umar in his grave. So he chose six from among us—myself being one of them—to choose for the community a man from among us. When we gathered, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān spoke first, and forfeited to us any claim to the caliphate on the stipulation that we give him our trust for him to choose a man from the remaining five and give him authority over the affairs of the community. We gave him our trust, so he took ‘Uthmān’s hand and pledged allegiance to him. A thought occurred to me about that, but when I looked into my affair, my knowledge had preceded my pledge. So I pledged allegiance and submitted. I used to go out to battle if he sent me, and accept what he gave me. When ‘Uthmān was killed, I looked into my affair, and, behold, the knot that was once for Abū Bakr and ‘Umar had been untied, and I had fulfilled the commission that was once for ‘Uthmān. There I was a man among the Muslims; no one had any claim or right over me, and he who is not like me (i.e. Mu‘āwiyah)—his relatives are not like my relatives, his knowledge is not like my knowledge, and his precedence is not like my precedence—jumped for the caliphate, yet I was more worthy of it than him.’ They said: ‘You have spoken the truth. Inform us about your fighting of these two men—i.e. Ṭalḥah and Zubayr—your companions in the Hijrah, your companions in the Pledge of Pleasure and your companions in the consultation [called by ‘Umar].’ He said: ‘They pledged allegiance to me in Madinah, and opposed me in Basra. If a man who pledged to allegiance to Abū Bakr seceded from him, we would certainly have fought him; and if a man who pledged allegiance to ‘Umar seceded from him, we would certainly have fought him.’

I heard the Shaykh, the Imam Abū ‘ġ-Ṭayyib Sahl ibn Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣu‘lūkī mention the superlative qualities of ‘Alī ؑ, his virtues, his distinctions, his virtues, the

indications of his truthfulness, the strength of his religion and the validity of his caliphate gathered in this hadith. He said:

Among his greatest qualities is that he never claimed the mention of the thought that occurred to him concerning ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān’s decision, even if it was easy, to the extent that he said ‘and a thought had occurred to me about that’. In this is a clarification that if any thought occurred to him concerning the affairs of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, and his inner thoughts and open position were at odds, he would certainly have expressed it explicitly or called attention to it implicitly, just as he did concerning what occurred to him when ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān did what he did.

The reason why Ṭalḥah and Zubayr fought ‘Alī was because some people depicted to them that ‘Alī was pleased with the killing of ‘Uthmān. So they went to ‘Ā’ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and influenced her to come out in seeking justice for the blood of ‘Uthmān and reconciliation between the people by removing ‘Alī from between them and those who came to Madīnah and killed ‘Uthmān. So Satan came between the two factions until they killed; and then they were remorseful about what they did and most of them repented. ‘Ā’ishah used to say: ‘I wish that I had lost ten like the child of al-Ḥārith ibn Hāshim, and that I had never taken the course that I took.’ It is narrated that she never once mentioned this except that she cried until her scarf was wet and said: ‘If only I could forget and be forgotten!’

It is narrated that on the Day of the Camel ‘Alī sent for Ṭalḥah, so he came. ‘Alī said: ‘I implore you, by Allah, did you hear the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “Whoever I was the master of, ‘Alī is his master. O Allah! Befriend whoever befriends him, and be an enemy to whoever is an enemy to him!”’ Ṭalḥah said yes. So ‘Alī said: ‘Then why do you fight me?’ Ṭalḥah said: ‘I will not mention.’ He said: ‘Then go, Ṭalḥah.’

It is narrated that when a pledger accused a man from the companions of ‘Alī and then redeemed his pledge, ‘Alī was informed of that and said: ‘Allah is the greatest! Allah and His Messenger have spoken the truth! Allah refused to enter him into Paradise except that allegiance to me is on his neck.’ It is also narrated that news of the repentance of az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām reached ‘Alī, so he said: ‘By Allah, he did not repent out of cowardice, but rather he repented out of remorse.’

When Ibn Jurmūz, the killer of Zubayr, came, Zubayr said: ‘The killer of Ibn Ṣafīyyah enters the Fire. I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: “Every prophet has disciples, and my disciple is Zubayr”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim).

‘Alī said: ‘I indeed hope that myself, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr are among those about whom Allah ﷻ said:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَى سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ

“We remove the rancour from their breasts and make them brothers, facing each other on couches” (Qur’ān 15:47).’

Muḥammad al-Ḥanafīyyah said:

The Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ؑ was innocent of the killing of ‘Uthmān. He used to say: ‘By Allah, I did not kill, did not order his killing, was not pleased with his killing and had no part in his killing. To the contrary, I was overwhelmed.’ He also used to say: ‘I indeed hope that ‘Uthmān and I are among those about whom Allah ؑ said: “We remove the rancour from their breasts and make them brothers, facing each other on couches.”’

Sha‘bī said: ‘I met 500 or more Companions of the Prophet ؐ. All of them used to say that ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr are in Paradise.’

As for he who seceded from the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ؑ in the Levant, seeking justice for the blood of ‘Uthmān, then indeed he was mistaken for his contending with ‘Alī for authority. We infer the innocence of ‘Alī from the killing of ‘Uthmān by him having pledged allegiance to him, and thereafter by his precedence in Islam, the Immigration, jihad in Allah’s path, his many superlative qualities and his abundant virtues that are known to the people of knowledge.

Those who seceded from him and contended with him were rebels against him. The Messenger of Allah ؐ informed ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir that the ‘oppressive faction’ (*al-fi’ah al-bāghiyyah*) would kill him, and it was those who seceded from the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ؑ that killed ‘Ammār in the battle of Siffin. On the authority of Umm Salamah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ؐ said to ‘Ammār: “The oppressive faction will kill you”’ (Muslim).

Ibn Khuzaymah ؒ said: ‘The best people after the Messenger of Allah ؐ and the most worthy of them for the caliphate are Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq, then ‘Umar al-Fārūq, then ‘Uthmān Dhū ’n-Nūrayn, and then ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allah’s mercy and pleasure be upon them all).’ He also said: ‘Everyone who contended with the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ؑ in his authority, then he is an oppressor. This is what we know from our shaykhs, and this is the opinion of Ibn Idrīs ash-Shāfi‘ī ؒ.’

He who seceded from him did not leave Islam by his oppression (*baghī*). On the authority of Abū Hurayrah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ؐ said: “The Hour will not be established until two great factions fight. There will be a huge battle between them, and their claim is one”’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). He meant by the establishment of the Hour the dying out of that era. And Allah is most knowledgeable.

It is soundly transmitted from ‘Alī ؑ that he fought them in a manner that the people of justice fight the people of oppression. Furthermore, his companions did not transgress upon the injured, did not kill anyone who surrendered and did not take spoils from anyone killed. Abū Umāmah said:

I witnessed Şiffin, and they did not transgress upon the injured, kill anyone who surrendered or take spoils from anyone killed. The Messenger of Allah ؐ informed about a division that would be between two factions of his community: a group of defectors would secede from them both, and the first of the two factions would rightfully fight them. This division was between ‘Alī and he who contended with him, and the Prophet considered both of them to be from his community. Then this group of defectors—the people of Nahrawan—seceded, so ‘Alī and his companions—the first of the two factions—rightfully fought them. The Prophet ؐ described the seceding defectors and informed about the deformed man who would be among them. They were found with the attribute that he described, and the deformed man was found with the quality that he was described with.

That is clear from the hadith of Abū Sa‘id al-Khudrī and other than him. The Prophet’s ؐ informing about that and its fulfillment after his death are from the indications of prophethood.

Among what reinforces the superlative qualities of the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ؑ is being right by fighting them and correct in killing whoever he killed among them; and when the deformed man was found, ‘Alī ؑ prostrated out of gratitude to Allah ؐ for enabling to him successfully fight them. We have mentioned these hadiths in [*Kitāb al-Faḍā’il*], and this book cannot bear more than this.

On the authority of Abū Bakrah:

I saw the Messenger of Allah ؐ on the pulpit, and al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī was by his side. The Prophet turned, looked at him, then looked at the people and said: ‘This son of mine is a great leader, and perhaps Allah will reconcile between two factions of Muslims through him.’ (Bukhārī)

Sufyān (one of the narrators) said: ‘Him saying “two factions of Muslims” delights us very much.’ This delighted them because the Prophet ؐ called all of them ‘Muslims’.

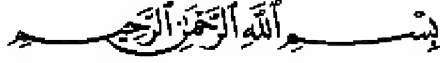
The aforementioned is a report from the Messenger of Allah ؐ about al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī abdicating to Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān after the death of ‘Alī. He [al-Ḥasan] said in his address:

O people! Verily Allah guided you with the first of us, and spared your blood with the last of us. Indeed this affair that Mu‘āwiyah and I differ about, it is a right for a person

more worthy of it than me, or a right for me that I abdicate to Mu‘āwiyah as a means of reconciling the Muslims and sparing their blood. ‘I do not know—perhaps it is a trial for you and a temporary enjoyment’ (Qur’ān 21:111).

That which we have put in this book is the creed of the People of the Sunnah and the Group and their positions. We have written a book for each chapter in it that includes its explanation and is illuminated by its proofs and evidences. We abridged this book so as to merely mention its fundamentals and direct to a portion of its evidences out of a desire to benefit whoever looks into it. May Allah enable us to follow the Sunnah and avoid innovation, and make the end of our affairs guidance and happiness through His grace and extensive mercy! Indeed He is loving, bountiful and liberally forgiving!

APPENDIX



THE SUMMATION OF THE CREED

(*ash-Shi'ār fī al-'Aqā'id*)

A Synopsis of Imam Bayhaqī's al-I'tiqād wa'l-Hidāyah

BY SAEED FODEH

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Benediction and peace be upon our Master Muḥammad, the best of the Prophets and the Messengers. As to what follows:

This is a book¹ that includes the clarification of what is obligatory upon the legally responsible to believe in, and what should be a concise summation.

1 This translation is taken from a PDF document, without a publication location or publisher, with the treatise dated at the end by Fodeh as 27/1/1994. The chapter numbers in this section correlate with the relevant chapter in the main section. Ed.

CHAPTER 1


THE FIRST OBLIGATION

Knowledge of Allah and His attributes is obligatory. Confessing it and bearing witness to it by what one knows is obligatory. Bearing witness is required in order to preserve blood.


Knowledge and affirmation are required for the validity of faith and fulfilling [the condition of] faith until one deserves entry into Paradise by Allah's promise.

CHAPTER 2

THE OCCURRENCE OF THE COSMOS

Among [the preludes to faith] is observing the cosmos and its diversity, its order and its change. The cosmos' being a locus for occurrences indicates occurrence. The occurrent thing is not independent from a maker that makes it. Whatever is permissible for occurrent things is not permissible for Him. In this, we follow Ibrahim .

Also, the gathering of different, mutually averse things is an indication of the existence of a gatherer that compelled them to gather. If the human being thinks about himself, he sees it ordered and upon various, transitory states. He knows of his essence, and that it is not possible for him to complete it at once. Thus he knows that he did not do these actions to himself, and that he has a maker.

Some scholars have traversed the way of inference through the premises of prophethood and the miracles of the divine message, because their indications are taken by way of sensory perception for whoever witnesses them, and from the way of widespread reports for whoever is absent from them. Hence when prophethood is affirmed, it becomes a foundation in regards to the obligation of accepting whatever the Prophet  called to. The faith of the majority of the responders to the Messengers p was in this manner.

CHAPTER 3

ALLAH'S NAMES AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

Allah has ninety-nine names. Whoever enumerates them enters Paradise. This does not negate other than them. The only intent is that whoever enumerates ninety-nine names from Allah's names enters Paradise. Allah has beautiful names and sublime attributes. He has no likeness in His creation and no partner in His sovereignty. There is absolutely nothing like him, and He is Hearing, Seeing.

CHAPTER 5

ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES AND ACTIVE ATTRIBUTES

Allah has names and attributes. His names are His attributes and His attributes are His descriptions. They are of two divisions: one of them is essential attributes, and the other is active attributes.

The essential attributes are what He has rightfully possessed eternally and without end, and they are of two divisions:

1. Intellectual. Its way of affirmation is intellectual proofs together with revelation's conveyance of it. It is of two divisions: a) whatever the information of the informer indicates about Him and whatever the describer describes Him with concerning His essence. Here, the name is the named, such as 'thing', 'essence', 'existent' and 'eternal'; b) the second is whatever the information of the informer indicates about Him, and whatever the describer describes Him with concerning attributes additional to His essence that are inherent in it, such as living, knowledgeable, powerful, willful, hearing, seeing, speaking and everlasting. These descriptions indicate attributes additional to His essence that are inherent in it, like His life, His knowledge, His power, et cetera. Here, the name is an attribute inherent in the named. It is not said that it is the named.
2. Revelatory. Its way of affirmation is the Book and the Sunnah only, like the Face, the hands and the eye. These are also attributes inherent in His essence. It is not permissible to ascribe a modality to them. The Face is an attribute of His, and it is not a form. The 'hands' are two attributes of His, and they are not limbs. The 'eye' is an attribute of His, and it is not an eyeball. The way of affirming them as essential attributes of His is the Truthful One's conveyance of them.

As for His active attributes, then they are terms derived from His actions that are conveyed by revelation. He rightfully possesses them in a manner that does not cease yet is other than eternal, because the actions that they are derived from them are not eternal. It is like the describer's describing Him as the Creator, Provider and Reviver. If the naming in this division is from Allah, then it is an attribute inherent in His essence, which is His speech. It is not said that it is the named or other than the named. If the naming is from the created, then in regards to it, it is not the named.

Among our companions is he who was of the opinion that all of His names are of His essence, which has essential attributes and active attributes. According to this, the name and the named in regards to the whole are one; and Allah is most knowledgeable. The discourse of our early companions indicates this way.

The attributes that the Originator rightfully possesses are more than can be enumerated. They are dispersed throughout the Book and the Sunnah.

The principle is that every attribute of perfection for God is affirmed, and every deficiency is negated from Him.

Allah is living. He has a life by which He is distinguished from the attribute of he who is not living. He is powerful and has a power by which He is distinguished from the attribute of he who is not powerful. He is knowledgeable and has a knowledge by which He is distinguished from the attribute of he who is not knowledgeable. His knowledge encompasses all knowable things, just as His power includes all possible things. He has hearing and sight. He perceives with one of them all audible things, and with the other all visible things. He is speaking and has speech by which He is distinguished from the attribute of the mute and the silent. He is everlasting and has everlastingness. The meaning of Him being described with that is that He is necessarily existent and will continue to exist without ceasing.

He has the attributes of Face, hands and eye. We know by the Revealed Law and by the intellect that they are not a form, nor a limb, nor an eyeball. Rather, they are essential attributes. We have affirmed them by the Book and the Sunnah without any ascription of resemblance.

CHAPTER 6

THE ATTRIBUTE OF ACTION

Allah has always been, and there was nothing other than Him—not water, not the Throne, or other than them. All of these are distinct created entities. The origin of all created things—whether water, light, darkness, wind, dust, and other than them—is from Him, i.e. from His creation and His invention. He is the Creator of everything. He created water first, or water and whatever He willed of His creation, not from any base or any previous model. He then made it a base for whatever He created thereafter. He is the Innovator and the Originator. There is no god other than Him, and no creator besides Him.

CHAPTER 10

THE QUR'ĀN

The Qur'ān is Allah's speech. His speech is an attribute among His essential attributes. It is not permissible for there to be any created thing, occurrent thing or occurrence among His essential attributes.

If the Qur'ān were created, Allah would have said to it: 'Be.' The Qur'ān is His saying, and it is inconceivable that His saying be a statement of His, because that would necessitate a second saying; and the second saying and its relation to a third saying are like the first. This leads to a never-ending infinite regress, which is fallacious.

If it is fallacious for the Qur'ān to be created, it is necessary for the saying to be an eternal command related to the constructed thing without ceasing. Just as the command is related to prayer tomorrow (yet tomorrow is non-existent), and related to every legally-responsible person who will be created until the Day of Resurrection, except its relation to them is on the condition, which will be valid in what is to come.

Likewise is His saying in regards to construction.

Just as Allah's knowledge is timeless, and timelessly-related to knowable things according to their true nature at their occurrence, His hearing is timeless, related to the perception of audible things at their appearance. His sight is timeless, related to the perception of visible things at their existence, without the occurrence of a meaning within Him. He is exalted beyond being a locus for occurrences, and anything among His essential attributes being occurrent.

Allah's speech has never ceased to be existent, and will never cease to be existent. His speech became audible without any modality for whomever He willed among His angels, His Messengers and His slaves through Him making them hear His speech whenever He willed. The audible is His speech, which He has never ceased nor will ever cease to be described with. His speech does not resemble the speech of created things; just as the rest of His descriptions do not resemble the descriptions of created things. What we hear from the Qur'ān is Allah's speech. Allah spoke to His slaves through it by sending the Messenger with it.

Human speech may be face-to-face in regards to its ruling, and Allah's speech to His slaves may be through a message and revelation, like what the Book came with. That is called 'speech' and 'speaking.'

The Qur'ān is in the Preserved Tablet, and in the chests of those who were given knowledge. It is recited with the tongues. The Qur'ān is literally written in volumes,

literally preserved in the chests, literally recited with the tongues, and literally audible to us.

CHAPTER 11

THE ASCENSION

The correct position in all of that is limitation to what was conveyed by the revelation without ascribing modality.

The early scholars and whoever followed them among the latter scholars were of this position. They said: The Book has articulated the ascension over the Throne in more than one verse, and sound reports of it have been conveyed. Accepting it from the aspect of the revelation is obligatory. Researching it and seeking a modality for it is impermissible.

The ascension is not unknown; its modality is incomprehensible; faith in it is obligatory; and asking about it is a heretical innovation. The scholars applied this to the issue of 'coming', 'arriving' and 'descent' also. None of the Companions and the Followers talked about the interpretation of the Hadith of the Descent. In regards to what is conveyed in the Book and the Sunnah from the likes of this, the People of Hadith are of two divisions:

Among them is he who accepted it, believed it, did not interpret it, consigned knowledge of it to Allah, and negated modality and ascribing resemblance from it.

And among them is he who accepted it, believed it, and interpreted it in a manner whose usage is correct in the language and does not conflict with divine oneness.

Overall, it is obligatory to know that Allah's ascension is not ascension of straightening from crookedness, settlement in a place, or touching anything from His creation. Rather, He is ascended over His Throne as He informed—with no modality, with no 'where'—distinct from the entirety of His creation. His arriving is not arriving from place to place. His coming is not with motion. His descent is not with a movement. His self is not a body. His Face is not a form. These are only descriptions that the revelation came with, so we say them and negate the ascription of modality from them.

CHAPTER 12

THE BEATIFIC VISION

Seeing Allah with eyesight is permissible. The visions of the believers do not perceive Him in the world, unlike the Afterlife. The visions of the disbelievers do not perceive Him at all.

Allah is seen, yet is not fully comprehensible—just He is known yet knowledge does not encompass Him. Allah is able to show Himself to His believing slaves. In Paradise, Allah shows Himself to the believers after He has lifted the veil from their eyes. So they will see Him with no modality and no direction.

CHAPTER 13

PREDETERMINATION

Faith in predetermination is faith in the precedence of Allah's knowledge of whatever is to be from the earnings of humanity and other than them among created things, and the origin of all of it from His measure and creation of them, the good and the bad.

Deeds are obligatory for all. Everyone, in the days of his life, is facilitated to the deeds that were predetermined before his existence, and carries on with the deeds that are a sign for him to be hopeful and fearful.

If a human being treats himself, uses incantations or is pious, then it is with Allah's determination and facilitation that he is enabled to do that. If He did not determine it, doing it would not be feasible for him; and through Allah is the enablement.

CHAPTER 14

THE CREATION OF ACTIONS

Allah is the Creator of everything—entities and actions, good and bad. There is no creator besides Him.

The effective meaning in regards to the existence of all actions—whether laughing, crying, planting, killing, and other than this—is His creation and His bringing them into existence after having not existed. His slave's direct involvement in these actions is only through a newly occurring ability that our Creator brought into existence after non-existence according to whatever He willed.

So, they are a creation of Allah's, meaning that He invented them with eternal ability, whilst they are His slaves' acquisition, meaning the relation of a newly occurring ability with their direct involvement—which is from their acquisition. That these actions or some of them happen in ways that differ with the intention of their acquirer indicates that there is one who made them happen according to what other than the acquirer willed: He is Allah, our Lord. He created us and created our actions; and He has no associate whatsoever in His creation. Blessed is Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

The action of the Eternal Able is creation. The action of the occurrent-able is acquisition. The Eternal is exalted and magnified over acquisition, and the occurrent is insignificant and beneath creating.

As for not ascribing bad to Allah, then its only meaning is to indicate the use of etiquette when praising and extolling Allah by ascribing to Him all pleasant affairs, and not the bad ones. Allah has never created bad. Rather, it is the slave's acquisition of it and undertaking it that is bad. It is not meant to include one thing under His power and to negate its opposite.

As for Allah's timeless knowledge of the People of Paradise and the People of the Fire, then it means lordly arrangement. That does not nullify their legal accountability by the right of slavehood, yet He has informed that everyone of the creation is facilitated to whatever was arranged for him in the Unseen. Deeds lead him to whatever was written for him—whether joy or sorrow. He is rewarded or punished by way of recompense. The meaning of deeds is to be subject to reward and punish. Through deeds the proof is substantiated, and how one is dealt with revolves around them.

Allah guides whomever He wills and misguides whomever He wills. Allah comes between a believer and disbelief, and comes between a disbeliever and faith. He does not misguide anyone except whoever He has decreed shall reach Hell.

CHAPTER 16

ON ACTIONS BEING BY ALLAH'S WILL

Indeed we do not will anything unless Allah has willed it. No one believes except he for whom joy has preceded from Allah in the First Remembrance. No one goes astray except he for whom sorrow has preceded from Allah in the First Remembrance.

So, whatever Allah willed is; and whatever He did not will, it will never be.

The slave does not possess an acquisition that benefits him or harms him except through Allah's will and His power. Shāfi'ī said:

You will even if I do not will;

Whatever I will never is if You do not will.

You created the slaves according to what You know

And in knowledge the youth and the elderly proceed.

You gifted that one and have forsaken this one,

Gave to this one and never gave to that one.

Among them is the sorrowful and among them is the joyful,

Among them is the repugnant and among them is the beautiful.

CHAPTER 17

ON CHILDREN BEING BORN WITH A NATURAL PREDISPOSITION TO ISLAM

Every child is born upon the natural predisposition. Then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian. If they are Muslims then he is a Muslim.

So everyone is upon the natural disposition that Allah originated the creation upon until he clearly expresses and chooses one of the two positions: faith or disbelief.

There is no judgment for children by themselves in the world. The judgment for them is only through their parents according to whatever state the parents were on the day they were born: either a believer according their faith, or a disbeliever according to their disbelief.

As for judgment in the Afterlife, then Allah is most knowledgeable of what they used to do. In the Afterlife, they are tested—the children of believers and the children of polytheists.

Some of the scholars said that the children of believers will join their parents in Paradise as a way of honouring them. That is not decisively affirmed for anyone in particular.

Hadiths have been narrated that indicate that the children of disbelievers are in the Fire. Some have been narrated that indicate that they are the servants of the People of Paradise.

It should be said regarding the second position—that the children of Muslims are tested—is that whoever is not delivered to one of his parents as a believer on the Day of Resurrection, his test is in the Afterlife insofar as he does not find someone to follow and join in Paradise.

CHAPTER 18

LIFESPAN AND PROVISION

‘Lifespan’ is an expression of the time in which the action of life is cut off, just as the appointment of a debt is an expression of the time in which the debt is collected. The appointed time of the killed and the dead is at the exit of their souls.

All of what the animal is nourished with from the permissible and the prohibited is its provision. Likewise are the legally responsible and children, even if they do not own it.

CHAPTER 19

FAITH

The believers are those who combine deeds, some of which occur in the heart, some with the tongue, some with both of them and the rest of the body, some with both of them or one of them, and with wealth.

Faith increases with [good] deeds, thus [good] deeds are among the constituents of faith. Faith decreases because it is subject to increase, and so it is subject to decrease. Scholars from the People of Hadith were of the opinion that the term ‘faith’ comprises acts of obedience—whether required or voluntary—and that they are of three divisions:

Firstly, a division wherein a person disbelieves by abandoning it. This is the belief in whatever is required to believe and for a person to profess belief in.

Secondly, a division wherein a person sins or disobeys by abandoning it, yet does not disbelieve so long as he does not deny its obligation. These are the required acts of obedience, such as the prayer, zakat, fasting, the hajj and avoiding the prohibited.

Thirdly, a division wherein a person misses out on the preferable by abandoning it, yet is neither a sinner nor a disbeliever. These are voluntary acts of worship.

They differed about how all of these are termed ‘faith’.

Among them is he who says that all of that is faith in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, because in the language ‘faith’ means ‘affirmation’ (*taṣḍīq*), and every act of obedience is an affirmation.

Among them is he who says that the creed (not profession) (*al-i’tiqād dūna al-iqrār*) is faith in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, and the remaining acts of obedience constitute faith to Allah and His Messenger. So, affirmation of Allah is establishing and admitting His existence; and affirmation for Him is the acceptance of His laws and following His ordinances with the understanding that they are correct, wise and just. Likewise is affirmation of the Prophet ﷺ and affirmation of him.

The revealed laws of Islam are called ‘faith’. ‘Faith’ and ‘Islam’ are both used as expressions of a single religion—if *Islām* is [taken in its] literal sense (and not with the meaning of ‘surrendering’ (*istislām*)).

Saying ‘if Allah wills’ in relation to faith is permissible if it were with the meaning of concern over faith in the future. The People of the Sunnah do not say decisively that they are believers to Allah—i.e. in the future—because Allah ﷻ knows the Unseen, so He is the Knower of what the slave’s future holds and what he will die upon. We do not know, so we entrust the affair of what we do not know to its Knower out of fear of a

bad ending. We say 'if Allah wills' with this understanding, and with hope in Allah ﷻ that He establishes us with the confirmed word in the life of this world and in the Afterlife. The People of the Sunnah do not doubt the existence of faith within them in the present. However, this does not preclude the possibility of changing in the future—may Allah protect us from that with His grace and extensive mercy!

CHAPTER 20

ON THE PERPETRATORS OF MAJOR SINS

Indeed Allah does not forgive partners being ascribed to Him. He forgives whatever is less than ascribing partners for whomever He wills without any punishment. He might punish some of them for the sins they committed, then pardon them and enter them into Paradise due to their faith. Allah made the Afterlife an abode of permanence and recompense for whatever good or bad was done in the world. If He does not pardon a person, then His praise is still magnified.

Committing a major sin does not remove one from the faith, unless it is disbelief. It is permissible to seek forgiveness for the committer of major sins, except for the disbeliever. According to this, a believer does abide eternally in the Fire, even if he enters it.

The Intercession is affirmed for the Prophet ﷺ and other than him.

CHAPTER 22

FAITH IN WHATEVER THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH CONVEYED

We believe in what Allah ﷻ revealed to His Messenger Muḥammad ﷺ concerning the Qur'ān. Its recording was not abrogated in his life, it remains preserved in his community and nothing has ever been added to or subtracted from it, just as Allah promised.

Faith in the Scale is obligatory. It has been said about how deeds are weighed that the pages of good deeds are put in one scale and the pages of bad deeds in another, and then they are weighed. It is also possible that Allah brings about bodies according to the number of good and bad deeds so that one of them is distinguished from the other and then they are weighed like bodies are weighed.

We believe in whatever is related in the Truthful One's report and interpret it with a correct understanding; and the enablement is through Allah.

From the signs of the Hour are the rising of the sun from the West, the Anti-Christ, the Beast, Yājūj and Mājūj, and the descent of ʿĪsā.

CHAPTER 23

FAITH IN THE PUNISHMENT OF THE GRAVE (WE SEEK REFUGE IN ALLAH FROM THE PUNISHMENT OF THE GRAVE)

The souls of the disbelievers are violently torn from them and [one should believe] that they are informed about the humiliating punishment that they are headed to. This is contrary to the believers, who will be given the glad tidings of the Paradise they were promised.

The dead is asked about his Lord and about Muḥammad ﷺ.

The believer sees his seat in Paradise and the disbeliever his seat from the Abode of Punishment.

The soul is returned to the body. The returning of the soul being one part, the questioning being one part, and the punishment being one part is not something that is rationally impermissible, nor is there any impossibility for what the reports have related about the punishment of the grave being separate parts. It is as Allah wills, for whomever Allah wills, and until Allah wills. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sought refuge from it and ordered his community to seek refuge from it.

Shāfi‘ī said:

Indeed the will of the slaves is up to Allah ﷻ. They do not will unless Allah, Lord of the Worlds, wills. Indeed people’s deeds are a creation of Allah’s and an action of the slaves. Predetermination, its good and its bad, is surely from Allah ﷻ. The punishment of the grave is true, the questioning of people in the grave is true; the Resurrection, the Reckoning, Paradise, the Fire, and other than these that the Sunnah has come with and has manifested on the tongues of the scholars and their followers in the lands of the Muslims are true.

CHAPTER 24

ADHERING TO THE SUNNAH AND AVOIDING INNOVATION

Allah said: ‘If you dispute about anything, then refer to Allah and the Messenger’ (Qur’ān 4:59). Shāfi‘ī said: ‘This means that if you differ about anything, then refer it to Allah and the Messenger.’

Meaning—and Allah is most knowledgeable—to what Allah and the Messenger said. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Whoever innovates in our affair what is not of it, it is rejected’ (Bukhārī and Muslim). He said:

Whoever enacts a good *sunnah* in Islam has its reward and the reward of whoever does it, without detracting anything from their rewards. Whoever enacts a bad *sunnah* in Islam bears its burden and the burdens of whoever does it, without detracting anything from their burdens (Muslim).

Abū Dharr said: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded us not to tire of commanding the good, censuring the objectionable and teaching people the sunnahs.’

If following what the Messenger of Allah ﷺ enacted is necessary, and that necessity is an abiding obligation, then there is no way to follow his Sunnah except after knowing it. There is no way for us to know it except by accepting the truthful person’s report about it. Thus accepting the report is necessary in order to be able to follow him. For this reason, he commanded teaching the Sunnah and calling to it.

Blameworthy disagreement (*al-khilāf al-madhmūm*) is what is contrary to the Book, a sound Sunnah, scholarly consensus, or whatever has the meaning of one of these. That is like the disagreement of whoever disagrees with the People of the Sunnah regarding what we have demonstrated in this book. Allah ﷻ said: ‘Do not be like those who split and disagreed after the clear proofs came to them’ (Qur’ān 3:105).

The Book, then the Sunnah, then scholarly consensus of the Companions have come with what we established concerning Allah’s attributes ﷻ, the beatific vision, His Prophet’s intercession and other than that. So whoever denies and disagrees in this regard, then that is a disagreement after the coming of clear proof (*majī’ al-bayyinah*). The rejection of whoever rejects what is related in the established Sunnah (*as-Sunnah ath-thābitah*) is ignorance of his obligation to follow whatever reaches him from it. The [false] interpretation of whoever interprets what is related in the Book is not permissible in the shariah, for there is no justification for discarding the *prima facie*

connotation unless with an equal or stronger evidence. May Allah protect us through His mercy [from false interpretation]!

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The Jews split into 71 sects, and likewise the Christians. My community will split into 73 sects’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

It is likely that the disagreement whose clarification is above was intended due to what has been related of him saying: ‘All of them are in the Fire except one, which is the Group.’ In a narration: ‘except one, which is Islam and their group.’ In a narration: ‘except one, which is what my Companions and I are upon.’

His Companions unanimously agreed on fundamental issues (*masā’il al-uṣūl*), for disagreement about what we demonstrated in this book has not been related from a single one of them. As for derivative issues (*masā’il al-furū’*), then so long as there is no unequivocal text from the Book or the Sunnah, they have agreed about some and disagreed about some. Nonetheless, it is not allowed for anyone to disagree about what they have agreed upon. As for what they disagreed about, then the author of the shariah is He who permitted them to have this type of disagreement, wherein He commanded them with extraction [of what they considered to be the correct position] and scholarly exertion (*ijtihād*), while knowing that ambiguity is subject to different views. Then He has given the one with the correct view two rewards, and the one with the wrong view one reward (due to the presumptive nature of scholarly exertion), and has pardoned him for whatever he was wrong about.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘When a judge judges, having exerted himself and is correct, he has two rewards. If he exerts himself yet is wrong, he has one reward’ (Tirmidhī and Nasā’ī).

This type of disagreement is not what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ rebuked in what we narrated. Shāfi‘ī رحمه الله used to consider those who disagree from this perspective to be in agreement insofar as each one of them carried out the exertion that he was burdened with and did not contravene an unequivocal text of the Book, an established Sunnah that reached him, a matter of scholarly consensus or a sound analogy.

[In the case of a mistaken judgment by a qualified jurist], he only examined an analogy, and it led him to a conclusion that his peer did not come to. This is just as certain stars lead to a house from a certain direction, yet others lead to a place his peer did not go. So, each one of them obviously fulfills what he has been burdened with; and no sin is on him insofar as the correct interpretation, the sound Sunnah, or sound analogy is absent from him or he is mistaken, for he is not burdened with knowing the Unseen. Therefore all the jurists of the major cities who tread the path of the Companions and the Followers in regards to what they agreed upon and differed about are like a single sect. This is the Saved Sect (*al-firqah an-nājiyah*) that the Messenger of

Allah ﷻ alluded to. Each one of them legitimately took his opinion from the Book, the Sunnah or scholarly consensus; and the enablement is through Allah.

As for other than them from the people of innovation being in the Fire eternally, then that is based on excommunicating them. So, whomever we do not excommunicate exits the Fire through having basic faith in the same manner as sinful Muslims, and the report is interpreted to mean that they are punished in the Fire for a period of time that is less than eternity. His ﷻ saying '*my community will split*' is adduced to leave off excommunicating them, as he included all of them as part of his community despite their sectarianism; and Allah is most knowledgeable.

CHAPTER 25

THE PROHIBITION OF ASSOCIATING WITH THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

Allah did not send a prophet except that in his community were Qadariyyah and Murji'ah who muddled the affair of his community. Indeed Allah has cursed the Qadariyyah and the Murji'ah on the tongues of 70 prophets! (Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*)

He said: 'Do not associate or converse with people who deny predetermination' (Abū Dāwūd and Aḥmad).

They are called Qadariyyah because they establish predetermination for themselves and negate it from Allah ﷻ. They negate from Him the creation of their actions and establish such for themselves. Thus by annexing some of the creation to Him they resemble the Zoroastrians in regards to their opinion of two fundamentals—light and darkness—and that good is from light's action and bad is from the action of darkness.

Whoever associates with people of heretical innovations and desires is not safe from them submerging him into their error, confusing him about some of what he knows, or annoying him before he leaves them.

Rabī' ibn Sulaymān said: 'I heard Shāfi'ī say: "It is better for a slave to meet Allah having committed every sin other than polytheism than it is to meet Him having believed in any heresy (*bi shay' min al-hawā*)."'

CHAPTER 26

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE RULER

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ‘There is no ruler who undertakes the affair of governing the Muslims and does not strive for them nor sincerely advise them except that he does not enter Paradise with them.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

He said:

‘Indeed each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock. The ruler who is over people is a shepherd and responsible for them. The husband is a shepherd over his household and responsible for them. A man’s wife is a shepherd over her husband’s home and her children, and she is responsible for them. A man’s slave is a shepherd over his master’s property and responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

It is obligatory upon him to be mindful of Allah, to honour the elderly among the Muslims and have mercy on the young, to dignify the scholar, to not beat them and not abase them, to not leave them alone and thereby excommunicate them, to not castrate them and thereby cut-off their children, and to not shut the door behind him and thereby leave the strong to eat the weak.

CHAPTER 27

OBEYING THE RULERS AND ADHERING TO THE GROUP

Allah said: 'O you who believe! Obey Allah, obey the Messenger, and obey those in authority among you' (Qur'ān 4:59). The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Whoever obeys me has obeyed Allah, and whoever disobeys me has disobeyed Allah. Whoever obeys the ruler has obeyed me, and whoever disobeys the ruler has disobeyed me.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

He said: 'Listening and obeying is obligated upon the Muslim whether he likes it or dislikes it, so long as he is not commanded with an act of disobedience. If he is commanded with an act of disobedience, then there is to be no listening or obedience.' (Bukhārī and Muslim)

He said: 'There will be leaders over you that you will rebuke for what you know of them. Whoever rebukes with his tongue is innocent, and whoever hates in his heart is secure. However, whoever is pleased and follows [will be taken to task].' It was said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Should we not kill them?' One of the narrators said: 'Should we not fight them?' He said: 'No, as long as they pray' (Muslim).

He said:

There is no prophet whom Allah sent to a community before me except that he had disciples and companions from his community that adhered to his Sunnah and followed it; and then people come after them who say what they do not do and do what they did not command. Whoever strives against them with his hand is a believer, whoever strives against them with his tongue is a believer, and whoever strives against them with his heart is a believer. There is no faith beyond that but a mustard seed. (Muslim)

CHAPTER 28

A SUMMARY OF VARIOUS OBLIGATIONS

Allah said: ‘Establish the prayer and give zakat’ (Qur’ān 2:110); ‘Whomever among you witnesses the month [of Ramadan] must fast’ (Qur’ān 2:185); and ‘Complete the hajj and the umrah for Allah’ (Qur’ān 2:196). In another verse He connected it with ability, which is adulthood, provision, transport and travel safety.

He commanded jihad and encouraged it, so that the collective obligation is fulfilled, in a number of verses in His Book, and prohibited vile acts, interest, murder, oppression and cutting-off family in a number of places.

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The thief is not a believer while he steals, the fornicator is not a believer while he fornicates, and the drinker is not a believer while he drinks. By He in whose hand is Muḥammad’s soul, none of you is a believer while he seizes a prized spoil that the believers look to possess, and none of you is a believer while he cheats. So beware! Beware!’ (Muslim)

He meant—and Allah is most knowledgeable—that these actions are not from the actions of he who is a believer with complete faith. Zuhri used to say: ‘The saying is from Allah, conveyance is on the Messenger and submission is on us.’ He also said: ‘They used to relate the hadiths from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as they emerged out of reverence for Allah’s sanctity, and they did not count sins as polytheism or disbelief.’

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said in the Farewell Hajj: ‘Which month do you know to have the greatest sanctity?’ The Companions said: ‘This month of ours.’ He said: ‘Which country do you know to have the greatest sanctity?’ They said: ‘This country of ours.’ He said: ‘Do you know what day is the greatest?’ They said: ‘This day of ours.’ He said: ‘Verily Allah ﷻ has sanctified your blood, your wealth and your honour except by right, like the sanctity of this day of yours in this country of yours. Have I not conveyed?’ He asked [the latter questions] three times, and each time they answered: ‘Yes, indeed.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

On the authority of Abū Umayyah ash-Sha‘bānī:

I went to Abū Tha‘labah al-Khashanī and said: ‘What do you make of this verse?’ He said: ‘Which verse?’ I said: ‘His saying: “O you who believe! You have charge of your own selves. He who goes astray will not harm you if you are guided” (Qur’ān 5:105).’ He said: ‘By Allah, I have asked one well informed about it. I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he said: “Command the good and forbid the objectionable until you see stinginess obeyed, desire followed, material things having effect, each person being impressed by his own opinion, and an affair that is out of your hands—then you have charge of your own selves. Leave the affair of the general people alone, for verily there are days that will come after you in which patience is like holding on to a hot coal, and the practising Muslim has the reward of 50 men doing the same deed.”’ (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah)

As for the derivative obligations (*furū‘ al-farā’id*) that the slaves regularly practice, special rulings and other than them for which there is no unambiguous text from the Book and no unambiguous text from the Sunnah for most of them (even if there is something about it from the Sunnah), then they are among the reports dealt with by specialists. Shāfi‘ī said about any text that is open to interpretation and may be used as a basis for analogy: ‘This is a level of knowledge that laypeople (*‘āmmah*) do not reach. If there is among them a sufficient number of people specializing [in the religious sciences], then there is no harm—if Allah ﷻ wills—if others leave it.’

He adduced for this opinion His ﷺ saying: ‘It is not for the believers to go out altogether. Let a few from every group stay behind in order to learn the religion in-depth and warn their people when they return to them so that they may take heed’ (Qur’ān 9:122). Other examples of collective obligations are jihad in Allah’s path, the funeral prayer and burial of the dead, and returning the greeting of peace.

If the slave knows how Allah is to be worshipped, then it is upon him to conform to the command in regards to what he worships Him with, so that he is obedient and compliant to the command. Allah ﷻ said: ‘They were not commanded except to worship Allah with sincere devotion to Him’ (Qur’ān 98:5). The Prophet ﷺ said:

Deeds are only by intentions, and a person has only what he intended. So whoever’s migration was for Allah and His Messenger, then his migration was for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever’s migration was to attain some material thing or to marry a woman, then his migration was for whatever he migrated for. (Bukhārī and Muslim)

CHAPTER 29

THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD ﷺ

He is Abū 'l-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim ibn 'Abd Manaf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb ibn Murrah ibn Ka'b. Allah named him ﷺ Muḥammad, Aḥmad and other names.

The indications of prophethood are many, and the reports about the appearance of miracles (*mu'jizāt*) are clear. Though individually not mass transmitted (*āḥād*), these reports are considered as a whole to be mass transmitted (*mutawātir*) and well known, for each one shares in a wondrous affair that breaks the law of nature. This is one way of mass transmission by which proof is established and any excuse is cut-off.

Among the indications of his prophethood that the People of the Book adduced for the validity of his prophethood is what they found in the Torah, the Gospel, and all of Allah's revealed books concerning his mention, his description, and his coming out of the land of the Arabs—even if many of them have been distorted from their places.

Among the indications of his prophethood are the wondrous affairs that happened before his birth and his launching ﷺ of amazing measures that undermined the authority of the nations of disbelief and degraded their word, that supported the affair of the Arabs and acclaimed their mention—like the affair of the elephant and the punishment and warning that Allah unleashed on its party. Among them is the extinguishing of the Zoroastrian's fire, the tumbling of the columns in the colonnade of Khosrow, the diminishing of the water of Sāwah, and the vision of Mūbadhān. No! By He who sent him with the truth and subjected these affairs to him, no rational person doubts anything of that. It is nothing but a divine affair, and a thing of heavenly dominance that breaks natural law. Human ability is incapable of attaining it, and no one is able to do it except He who possesses the creation and the command—blessed is Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

Among the indications of his prophethood ﷺ is that he was an unlettered man. He did not write with his hand nor did he read. He was born to an unlettered people and raised among them in a country with no historian aware of the news of previous generations, no astronomer practising the science of celestial bodies, no engineer knowledgeable of construction, no philosopher investigating nature, and no theologian guiding to proper argumentation and the various aspects of debate or how to infer the absent from the present. He never travelled to learn from a scholar by staying with him to acquire knowledge. All of this was known to the people of his country, and very well

known to those intimately familiar with his affair. The knowledgeable, the ignorant, the general and the special among them all knew him. He came to them with the news of the Torah, the Gospel and past nations when the original traces of these books had faded away and been distorted, and none remained from those who adhered to them and knew the correct from the false except a few.

Furthermore, he argued against every faction from the people of opposing religions with what no expert theologian or skilled apologist could even begin to refute. This is among the clearest indications that the affair that he came with is from Allah.

Among the indications of his prophethood and his truthfulness in regards to the great Qurʾān that he came with from Allah ﷻ is that he challenged all of the creation with the inimitability of the Qurʾān, and invited them to match it and come with a *sūrah* equal to it. Yet they refrained from doing so and were paralyzed from coming with anything equal to it.

The people of knowledge differ about the inimitability (*iʿjāz*) of the Qurʾān. Among them is he who said that its inimitability is from the perspective of its rhetoric (*balāghah*) and the beauty of its words, not its structure (*naẓm*). Among them is he who said that its inimitability is from the perspective of its structure, not its words, for the Arabs certainly had spoken with its words. Among them is he who said that the inimitability is contained in its reports about past episodes (*ḥawādith*); and its announcement of incidents (*kawāʾin*) in the future, and their occurrence with the characteristics that it communicated about them.

Among them is he who said that its inimitability is Allah paralyzing people from coming with its like and diverting (*ṣarfah*) their endeavours from matching it, which serves as a sign of his prophethood and an indication of the truthfulness of his claim.

Some of the scholars are of the opinion that establishing the inimitability of the Qurʾān is from all of these perspectives.

There is no meaning to the opinion of he who claims that there is no inimitability in its words [because the words were used in Arabic and widely circulated in Arab speech], as rhetoric is not in just individual words and terms without any consideration of the places and ways in which those words are used.¹

As for its inimitability from the perspective of structure, then this refers to the structure of speech by which the Qurʾān is distinct from all other forms of speech the Arabs use. Indeed the Arabs use five types of speech: prose (which the Arabs use in regular dialogue), metered poetry, sermons, epistles and rhymed prose. Each category has a different structure. The structure of the Qurʾān's speech is distinct from all of these. There is no rhymed prose in the Qurʾān, which is a fault, rather it is only separating between sentences or verses with similar sounds in order to improve the conveyance of meaning.

As for he who holds the position that its inimitability is because of its containing fulfilled prophecy, then this perspective is clear. Among its manifold supporting narrations is His saying: '*Alif. Lām Mīm*, Rome has been defeated in the closest land, and they will overcome after this defeat' (Qur'ān 30:1–3). And His saying: 'When Allah promised you that one of the two groups is for you, and you wished that the unarmed one would be for you; however, Allah willed to manifest the truth with His words and subvert the disbelievers' (Qur'ān 8:7). And His saying: 'Allah has made true for His Messenger the vision in reality—you will most definitely enter the Sacred Mosque securely, if Allah wills, shaving or shortening your hair, and without fear. He knew what you did not know, and made a close victory besides that' (Qur'ān 48:27).

And His saying:

Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among you that He will give them authority on the earth like He gave authority to those before them, and He will establish their religion, which He is pleased with, for them; and replace their fear with security. They worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. Whoever is ungrateful after that, then those are the sinful ones.

As for diversion and paralysis with regards to their hypothetical ability to come with its like, then that is known by the non-existence of any equal despite the plethora of motives and desperate need for it [on the behalf of the disbelievers]. It is not possible for any rational person to doubt that if they were able to do so, they would have rushed to do it, considering their avidness for refuting his claim and nullifying his word.

Among the indications of his truthfulness is that he was considered highly intelligent by the people of his time. Many eloquent polytheists admitted their inability to oppose the Qur'ān.

In addition to this, the appearance of many supernatural affairs upon his hands was well known and a matter that is clear and famous.

1 After this, a number of examples to illustrate the superior rhetoric of the Qur'ān are given. This cannot be effectively and profitably rendered into English, so it has been omitted. Tr.

CHAPTER 30

THE MIRACLES OF SAINTS

Allah said in the story of Maryam: ‘Every time Zakariyyā entered her prayer niche, he found that she had provision. He said: “O Maryam! Where did you get this from?” She said: “It is from Allah.” Indeed Allah provides for whomever He wills without account’ (Qur’ān 3:37). He said in the story of Sulaymān: ‘He who had some knowledge of the Book said: “I will bring it to you before you blink”’ (Qur’ān 16:40). Āṣif was not a prophet, and it is only not permissible for miracles to appear from liars. As for truthful people, then it is permissible, and is an indication of the truth of whomever He affirms among Allah’s prophets. Our Prophet ﷺ has told the story of the miracles that appeared from Jurayj the Monk, the boy who abandoned sorcery and followed the monk, and the group of Israelites who sought help in a cave closed by a boulder, and other than these that indicate the permissibility of this [belief]. Miracles have appeared from his Companions in his time and after it, then from righteous people from his community in a way that obligates believing in its permissibility. Khubayb ibn ‘Adī was witnessed eating grapes out of season while he was a prisoner in Makkah. And the statement of ‘Umar: ‘O Sāriyah, the mountain!’ and Sāriyah hearing him from a great distance. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had said: “Indeed there were clairvoyants in previous communities. If there is one in this community, he is ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’ (Bukhārī).

CHAPTER 31

THE COMPANIONS

Allah (ﷻ) said:

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Those who are with him are harsh on the disbelievers, merciful between themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty and pleasure from Allah. Their marks are on their faces from the traces of prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah. Their likeness in the Gospel is a crop that brings forth its yield, so it blooms, strengthens and stands erect on its stem, amazing the growers; and the disbelievers are enraged by them. (Qur'ān 48:29)

The Messenger's ﷺ statement about them is well known: 'The best people are my generation' (Muslim). Among them are the Ten for whom the Prophet ﷺ bore witness to their entry into Paradise, and he has borne witness for other than them.

CHAPTER 32

THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH'S ﷺ HOUSEHOLD, FAMILY AND WIVES

Allah said: 'Allah only wills to remove filth from you and purify you with a thorough purification, O People of the Household' (Qur'ān 33:33). In the first of the verses Allah explicitly states the wives of the Prophet: 'O wives of the Prophet! You are not like other women. If you are mindful, then do not soften your speech so that he in whose heart is a disease may desire' (Qur'ān 33:33). So, his wives are from the people of his household.

CHAPTER 34

THE CALIPHS

Saʿīd ibn Jamhān narrated on the authority of Safinah, the freed slave of the Messenger of Allah that he said: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “The caliphate in my community is thirty years; thereafter there are kingdoms.”’ Safinah said to me: ‘Count the caliphates of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.” So we examined them and found that they were thirty years.’

Abū Bakr succeeded the Prophet in Rabīʿ al-Awwal when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died. Abū Bakr died and eight days remained from Jumādā al-Ākhirah, on a Monday in the year 13. His caliphate was two years and four months minus ten nights. ‘Umar was killed on a Wednesday, with four nights remaining from Dhū ’l-Ḥijjah in the year 23. His caliphate was ten years, six months and four days. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān was killed on a Friday, 18 Dhū ’l-Ḥijjah 35 [AH]. His caliphate was twelve years minus ten days. ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was killed on a Friday, 17 Ramadan 40 [AH]. His caliphate was five years minus three months, and it is said minus two months.

Rabīʿ ibn Sulaymān said: ‘I heard Shāfiʿī say about the caliphate and preference (*tafḍīl*): “We start with Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, then ‘Alī (ﷺ).”’

CHAPTER 35

THE CALIPHATE OF ABŪ BAKR

On the authority of Abu Musa: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ fell ill, so he said: “Bring Abū Bakr so that he may lead the people in prayer.”’

On the authority of Jubair ibn Muṭ‘im:

A woman once came to the Prophet ﷺ and talked to him about something, so he ordered her to come back to him. She said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! What if I come back and do not find you?’ (It was as if she meant death) He said: ‘If you do not find me, then go to Abū Bakr.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

From Rabī‘ on the authority of Ḥudhayfah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Follow the two who are after me—Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, be guided by the guidance of ‘Ammār and cling to the knowledge of Ibn Mas‘ūd”’ (Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

These reports, and others with the same meaning, indicate that the Prophet ﷺ regarded Abū Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddīq to be the caliph after him. He did not instruct explicitly because he knew through Allah’s notification that the Muslims would unanimously agree on him, and that his caliphate would take effect by their unanimous agreement on pledging allegiance to him.

CHAPTER 36

THE UNANIMOUS ALLEGIANCE TO ABŪ BAKR

On the authority of ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died and Abū Bakr was at Sunh.¹ ‘Umar stood and said: ‘By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not die!’ (‘Umar later said: ‘By Allah, no other thought occurred to me but that, and that Allah ﷻ will send him again so that he may cut off men’s hands and feet.’)

So Abū Bakr came, uncovered the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and kissed him. He said: ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You were good in life and in death. By He in whose hand is my soul, Allah ﷻ does not ever make you taste death twice.’

Then he exited and said: ‘O you who swears on your messengers!’ When Abū Bakr spoke, ‘Umar sat. Then Abū Bakr praised Allah, extolled Him and said: ‘Whoever used to worship Muḥammad, surely Muḥammad has died. Whoever used to worship Allah, surely Allah is alive and does not die. “Verily you are dying and verily they are dying” (Qur’ān 39:30). “Muḥammad is not but a messenger. Messengers before him have passed. So if he dies or is killed, will you turn on your heels?”’ (Qur’ān 3:144)

The people began weeping bitterly. The Helpers gathered around Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah in the pavilion of Banū Sā’idah and said: ‘A leader from us, and a leader from you.’ Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ went to them. ‘Umar started talking and Abū Bakr quieted him. ‘Umar was saying: ‘By Allah, I did not intend by that anything, but I had prepared some words that amazed me, and I feared that they would not reach Abū Bakr.’ So he spoke and conveyed, and said in his speech: ‘We are the leaders and you are the ministers.’

Al-Ḥabbāb ibn al-Mundhir said: ‘No, by Allah! We will not ever do that. A leader from us, and a leader from you.’ So Abū Bakr said: ‘No! Rather, we are the leaders and you are the ministers,’ i.e. the Immigrants [are the ministers]. [He continued:] ‘[It must be] the Arabs most centrally located and with the best reputation, so pledge allegiance to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb or Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ.’ Hence ‘Umar said: ‘To the contrary, we pledge allegiance to you—the best of us, our master and the most beloved to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ ‘Umar took Abū Bakr by the hand and pledged allegiance to him, and the people pledged allegiance to him. Someone said: ‘Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah killed you.’ So ‘Umar said: ‘Allah killed him.’ (Bukhārī and Muslim)

The gathering of the Companions, including ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr is a sound report, so it is not permissible for anyone to say that what ‘Alī kept inside [himself] was different than what he manifested. ‘Alī was of greater stature and grander status than to go along with this immense matter for someone who had no right, or to show people something contrary to what was in his conscience. If this [contrary assertion] were permissible to claim about their agreeing on the caliphate of Abū Bakr, then scholarly consensus would never be valid. Yet scholarly consensus is among the proofs of the shariah, thus it is not permissible to render it useless by unsubstantiated notions.

That which is narrated concerning ‘Alī not pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr for six months is not from the saying of ‘Ā’ishah; rather, it is from the saying of Zuhri. Some of the narrators included it in the hadith of ‘Ā’ishah about the story of Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها. Mu‘ammar ibn Rāshid [one of the narrators] memorized it and narrated it in detail, and removed the statement of Zuhri from the hadith.

1 Sunḥ was the name of a location wherein there were some properties of Banū Ḥārith ibn Khazraj. Tr.

CHAPTER 37

THE CALIPHATE OF ʿUMAR

ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd said:

The most insightful of people are three: the king of Egypt when he recognised Yūsuf while people devalued him; the daughter of Shuʿayb when she said to her father about Mūsā: ‘O my father! Employ him! Indeed the best you can employ is the strong and the trustworthy’; and Abū Bakr when he recognised ʿUmar and appointed him as caliph.

Ibn ʿAbbās said to ʿUmar when he was stabbed:

You have accompanied the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and accompanied well, then he left while he was pleased with you. Then you accompanied Abū Bakr and accompanied well, and he left while he was pleased with you. You accompanied the Muslims and accompanied well, and if you leave them, you will leave them while they are pleased with you. (Bukhārī)

CHAPTER 38

THE CALIPHATE OF ‘UTHMĀN

On the authority of ‘Amr ibn Maymūn:

I saw ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb—and he mentioned the hadith of his stabbing. The people said: ‘Advise and leave someone in charge, O Emir of the Believers!’ He said: ‘No one is more worthy of this affair than that group whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased with when he died: ‘Alī, ‘Uthmān, Zubayr, Ṭalḥah, Sa’d and ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf. ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar witnesses with you, and he has nothing of this matter’—he said this to console him. ‘If Sa’d is the one for the affair, then so be it, and if not, then seek aid from him for whichever one of you he commands; for I do not pick him out due to incapacity or treachery.’

‘I advise the caliph after me. . .’ then he mentioned his advice to the first Immigrants, then the Helpers, then the people of the major cities, then the desert Arabs, and then the non-Muslims under Muslim governance. ‘Umar was buried, and when his burial was finished the people returned home and the aforementioned group met.

‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Make your affair for three men among you.’ Zubayr said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Alī.’ Ṭalḥah said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Uthmān.’ Sa’d said: ‘I have made my affair for ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān.’ So ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Which of you will be free of this affair, and thus we make it for him, with Allah and Islam as his witness? For sure, he must thoughtfully consider which of the two is best and be avid about the welfare of the community.’ So, the two elders were silent.

‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said: ‘Do you make it for me, with Allah as my witness that I do not deviate from choosing the best of you?’ They said yes. So he took the hand of one of them and said: ‘You have kinship to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and precedence in Islam that I have known, and Allah is over you that if I order you, you will most certainly act fairly, and that if I order ‘Uthmān, you will most certainly listen and obey.’ Then he went to the other and said the same thing. When he took their covenant he said: ‘Raise your hand, O ‘Uthmān,’ and pledged allegiance to him. ‘Alī also pledged allegiance to him, and the people of the house (*ahl ad-dār*) entered and pledged allegiance to him.

Miswar ibn Makhramah narrated:

When they gathered, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān said the testimony of faith and then said: ‘As for what follows—O ‘Alī! Indeed I have considered the people’s affair, and do not see them as being on par with ‘Uthmān, so do not make a way over yourself.’ He took ‘Uthmān’s hand and said: ‘I pledge allegiance to you according to the Sunnah of Allah, His Messenger and the two caliphs after him.’ So, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān pledged allegiance, and the people pledged allegiance—the Immigrants, the Helpers, the commanders of the armies and the Muslims. This was after ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān had consulted the people for three days, and every man of sound judgment that he consulted did not place anyone else on par with ‘Uthmān.

CHAPTER 39

THE CALIPHATE OF ‘ALĪ

Zuhri said:

When ‘Uthmān was killed, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib came out to the people and called them to pledge allegiance to him, so the people pledged allegiance to him and did not consider Ṭalhah or anyone else for it. This is because those who remained from the people of the consultation [summoned by ‘Umar on his deathbed] had forfeited their rights when they pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān (as previously mentioned), so no one remained among them who did not forfeit except ‘Alī. He was loyal in ‘Uthmān’s tenure until he was killed, and he was the best of those who remained of the Companions. No one was more worthy of the caliphate than him. Furthermore, he was not high-handed in demanding it—despite his being the worthiest of people for it—rather the pledge took its course for him, and those who remained from the people of the consultation pledged allegiance to him with the rest of the people.

On the authority of Sālim al-Murādī Abu ‘Ala: ‘I heard Ḥasan say [the following]:’

When ‘Alī arrived in Basra immediately after Ṭalhah and his companions, ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Kawā and Ibn ‘Abbād stood and said to him: ‘O Emir of the Believers! Inform us of this travel of yours. Is it a bequest of the Messenger ﷺ, a pledge he took from you, or an opinion you viewed when the community split and its word differed.’

He said: ‘I will not be the first to lie on him. By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not die suddenly nor was he killed. He lingered in his terminal illness, and throughout that the muezzin would come to him and call for the prayer and he would say: “Bring Abū Bakr to lead the people in prayer.”

‘He left me and had seen my place. If he had taught me anything, I would most certainly have implemented it. This is to the extent that even one of his wives suggested to him: “Indeed Abū Bakr is a soft-hearted man. If he stands in your place, the people will not listen. If you would just order ‘Umar to lead the people in prayer. .” So he said to her: “Indeed you are like the women plotting against Yūsuf.”

‘When the Messenger of Allah’s ﷺ soul was taken, the Muslims examined their affair. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ had authorized Abū Bakr in their religious affair, so they authorized him in their worldly affair. Therefore the Muslims pledged allegiance to him, and I pledged allegiance to him with them. I used to go out to battle if he sent

me, and accept what he gave me. I was a whip between his hands in regards to implementing the prescribed punishments. If there was any favouritism on his part, at his death he would have made the caliphate for his son; however, he selected ‘Umar, and ‘Umar did not fail. So the Muslims pledged allegiance to him, and I pledged allegiance to him with them. I used to go out to battle if he sent me, and accept what he gave me. I was a whip between his hands in regards to implementing the prescribed punishments. If there was any favouritism on his part, at his death he would have made the caliphate for his son. He disliked the idea of the body of the Quraysh electing a man and giving him authority over the affairs of the community and there not being any mistreatment towards whoever was after him except that it would come to ‘Umar in his grave. So he chose six from among us—myself being one of them—to choose for the community a man from among us.

‘When we gathered, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān spoke first, and forfeited to us any claim to the caliphate on the stipulation that we give him our trust for him to choose a man from the remaining five and give him authority over the affairs of the community. We gave him our trust, so he took ‘Uthmān’s hand and pledged allegiance to him. A thought occurred to me about that, but when I looked into my affair, my knowledge had preceded my pledge. So I pledged allegiance and submitted. I used to go out to battle if he sent me, and accept what he gave me.

‘When ‘Uthmān was killed, I looked into my affair, and, behold, the knot that was once for Abū Bakr and ‘Umar had been untied, and I had fulfilled the commission that was once for ‘Uthmān. There I was a man among the Muslims; no one had any claim or right over me, and he who is not like me (i.e. Mu‘āwiyah)—his relatives are not like my relatives, his knowledge is not like my knowledge, and his precedence is not like my precedence—jumped for the caliphate, yet I was more worthy of it than him.’

They said: ‘You have spoken the truth. Inform us about your fighting of these two men—i.e. Ṭalḥah and Zubayr—your companions in the Hijrah, your companions in the Pledge of Pleasure and your companions in the consultation [called by ‘Umar].’

He said: ‘They pledged allegiance to me in Madinah, and opposed me in Basra. If a man who pledged to allegiance to Abū Bakr seceded from him, we would certainly have fought him; and if a man who pledged allegiance to ‘Umar seceded from him, we would certainly have fought him.’

Imam al-Bayhaqi said: the reason why Ṭalḥah and Zubayr fought ‘Alī was because some people depicted to them that ‘Alī was pleased with the killing of ‘Uthmān. So they went to ‘Ā’ishah, the Mother of the Believers, and influenced her to come out in seeking justice for the blood of ‘Uthmān and reconciliation between the people by removing ‘Alī from between them and those who came to Madinah and killed ‘Uthmān. So Satan

came between the two factions until they killed; and then they were remorseful about what they did and most of them repented.

‘Ā’ishah used to say: ‘I wish that I had lost ten like the child of Ḥārith ibn Hāshim, and that I had never taken the course that I took.’

Likewise, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr repented from fighting the Emir of the Believers ﷺ.

As for he who seceded from the Emir of the Believers ‘Alī ﷺ in the Levant, seeking justice for the blood of ‘Uthmān, then indeed he was mistaken for his contending with ‘Alī for authority and was a wrongful insurgent against him. On the authority of Umm Salamah: ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to ‘Ammār: “The insurgent faction (*al-fi’ah al-bāghiyyah*) will kill you”’ (Muslim).

On the authority of Abū Bakrah:

I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on the pulpit, and al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī was by his side. The Prophet turned, looked at him, then looked at the people and said: ‘This son of mine is a great leader, and perhaps Allah will reconcile between two factions of Muslims through him.’ (Bukhārī)

This is a report from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī abdicating to Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān after the death of ‘Alī. He [al-Ḥasan] said in his address:

O people! Verily Allah guided you with the first of us, and spared your blood with the last of us. Indeed this affair that Mu‘āwiyah and I differ about, it is a right for a person more worthy of it than me, or a right for me that I abdicate to Mu‘āwiyah as a means of reconciling the Muslims and sparing their blood. ‘I do not know—perhaps it is a trial for you and a temporary enjoyment’ (Qur’ān 21:111).

The Shaykh, the Imam, Abū Bakr al-Bayhaqī said:

That which we have put in this book is the creed of the People of the Sunnah and the Group and their positions. We have written a book for each chapter in it that includes its explanation and is illuminated by its proofs and evidences.

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zakat. *See* alms-giving

Allah (ﷻ) says in the Qur'an, 'Say: We believe in Allah and what has been sent down to us' (2:136). Therefore it is understood by the scholars of Islam that the 'first obligation' for a responsible adult is to know Allah. Abū Dāwūd narrates, in his *Sunan*, that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, 'The Jews split into 71 or 72 sects; the Christians split into 71 or 72 sects; and my community will split into 73 sects.' Consequently, the Muslim community has diligently strived to preserve the correct theology of Islam, and this translated work is one exposition of the Sunni creed.

The author describes this treatise as 'a work on the subject of what the morally responsible needs to know concerning the foundations of knowledge and its derivatives. . . along with pointing out some of its evidences in a concise manner'. So the work covers essential tenets of faith concerning Allah ﷻ, His Messenger ﷺ, the beatific vision of Allah in the Hereafter, predetermination, the natural predisposition to Islam, His angels and Books, the punishment in the grave, the Resurrection, Paradise and Hell, the law of obeying rulers, miracles of the saints, the Companions, the Prophet's family and the caliphates of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī (رضي الله عنهم).

Imam Bayhaqī (384–458 AH) was a great Hadith master and Shāfi'ī jurist, who was praised by Dhahabī as 'Shaykh of Islam' and 'unequalled in his age' (*ṭāhīd zamānīh*). He authored monumental works on Hadith and Islamic law, as well as important books of theology (in which he represented an early Ash'arī persuasion).

